■ Super / E2
10 tips for celeb couples who want to stay together

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Lucio Tan edges out SMC in bid to buy out 40% of Del Monte

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Solons seek inquiry into missing GSIS funds for ARMM teachers

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WHO warns bird flu may develop into pandemic

Tanong ng Bayan / A22
Singil sa kuryente, dapat bang taasan?
CELLCARD KADA ARAW,
CELLPHONE KADA LINGGO! Text 2910 now!

Big fire sweeps thru Boracay

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—A huge fire broke out yesterday at the flea market in the premier island-resort of Boracay and at press time was threatening to spread to nearby establishments and restaurants on the world-renowned island-resort.

The flea market supplies almost all the 124 major hotels and resorts with fresh food. It

BIG FIRE/ A17

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Body of Echegaray widow released on strangers' help

By Norman Bordadora

THE KINDNESS of strangers again proved to be a potent force, with modest donations trickling in yesterday to help the family of the recently deceased widow of the first Filipino convict to die by lethal injection.

Earlier, at 6 p.m. on Thursday, officials of the

BODY/ A18

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Saturday, January 22, 2005 ★★ 76 pages / 9 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 45 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Pols behind illegal logging

Cases filed against 3 mayors, ex-solon

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE GOVERNMENT has acknowledged what has long been openly bandied about in certain provinces: Politicians are acting as financiers of illegal logging.

In a briefing yesterday at the Palace, Environment Secretary Michael Defensor also admitted that most of the politicians belonged to the ruling party, Lakas-CMD. He identified three mayors, an ex-congressman and a barangay captain as among those who had been charged with the offense.

Last December, President Macapagal-Arroyo gave Defensor and reforestation czar Victor Corpus one month to go after and file charges against big-time illegal loggers. Massive logging in the Sierra Madre mountain range had been blamed for the flash floods and landslides that killed more than 1,000 people in Quezon and Aurora last month.

Defensor said P50 million worth of logs were seized during the one-month operation.

He announced that Mayor Hernando "Nanding" Avellaneda of General Nakar town in Quezon was charged with various offenses, including illegal logging and graft, before the Ombudsman yesterday.

"As we have been directed by the President to file the necessary cases, we filed a case just now against [Avellaneda] and his brothers [Ricardo and Ronnie] and Barangay Captain David Prudente," Defensor said.

It was the Anti-Illegal Logging Task Force's Al Dagudag, a retired general, who filed the case before the Ombudsman.

Defensor said some P12 million worth of logs cut in Mauban, Quezon, had been attributed to the "illegal logging operations of Avellaneda," who was tagged as financier.

POLS/ A4

SEAL OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

SHALL WE DANCE? President George W. Bush and First Lady Laura shimmering in a silver V-neck gown by Oscar de la Renta twirl through a medley of songs including "I Could Have Danced All Night" at 10 inaugural balls on Thursday, this one's at the Commander and Chief ball at the Building Museum in Washington, DC. But the President, known for his aversion to black tie affairs, reportedly returned to the White House an hour and a half earlier than scheduled. *(More photos on Page A17.)* AP

Shun Americans' wasteful lifestyle, Filipinos urged

By Volt Contreras

WHAT species eats up the earth's resources "22 times more" than others and would probably need "six more planets" to satiate its appetite?

Americans, according to an award-winning environmental activist who did some Uncle Sam-bashing yesterday in a forum which gathered Filipino "good news" makers who had attained international recognition.

Von Hernandez of Greenpeace-Philippines, winner of the Goldman Environmental Prize in April 2003, drew chuckles from an otherwise formal audience at the Cultural Center of the Philippines when he spoke of "wasteful lifestyles" no Filipino should emulate.

SHUN/ A4

World jittery as Bush starts 2nd term

AS GEORGE W. Bush kicked off his second term as US president, many around the world are nervous about the intentions of a leader they regard as cocky, shallow and dangerous.

While America's Asian allies warmly welcomed his new term, some in the region expressed concern that his inauguration speech pointed to a more aggressive foreign policy that could worsen global tensions.

When he said world peace was best promoted by "the expansion of freedom in all the world," the critics wondered: Would he now set his sights on Iran?

Would he go to the mat, for instance, to bring democracy to China? Or work to stop the recent backslide toward authoritarian rule in Russia? Would he widen the rift with Europe?

Or would he become more conciliatory, seeking to secure a legacy the world would

WORLD/ A17

Miriam goes ballistic over Napocor P1.3-T debts

SANTIAGO aghast by officials who cannot explain the debts incurred by the energy corporation

JESS YUSON

By Christine O. Avendaño and Abigail L. Ho

SEN. MIRIAM Defensor-Santiago yesterday threatened to cut the budget of the Department of Energy in exasperation over what she claimed were anomalies that continue to plague state-owned energy corporations like the National Power Corp.

The feisty senator was particularly aghast by the failure of top Napocor officials to explain Napocor's huge debts which have reached P1.3 trillion.

Santiago made the threat after the hearing yesterday of DOE's budget by the finance committee's subcommittee on energy which she chairs.

During the more than three-hour hearing, Santiago grilled top energy officials led by Energy Secretary Vince Perez on Napocor's debts but failed to elicit satisfactory answers.

She said while Napocor says its debts have run to P600 billion, P200 billion of this would be assumed by the national government as provided for by the Electric Power Industry Act (Epira).

By her own estimates, Napocor debts would still run to P527 billion because while the power corporation says it could pay the debts from the sale of its assets, she noted that its assets were worth only P945 billion as against its liabilities of P1.371 trillion.

On top of this P527-billion

MIRIAM/ A6

DI NILA KAYA CARABAO ENGLISH!

London phone sex chatline fakes Pinay girls' accent, but...

LONDON—It was when the so-called "Filipina girls" started using traditional northern English phrases like "ey up" and "cheers me duck" that customers' suspicions were first aroused.

In fact, what was billed as a telephone sex chatline for men to talk with girls in Manila instead connected them to one of 40 British women in the more prosaic setting of a business center in Nottingham, central England.

Andrew Vanderahe, who ran the one pound ($1.9) per minute sex chatline, was given a small fine by a court in Nottingham for

LONDON/ A18

'Great Dying' blamed on global warming

WASHINGTON—An ancient version of global warming may have been to blame for the greatest mass extinction in Earth's history.

In an event known as the "Great Dying," some 250 million years ago, 90 percent of all marine life and nearly three-quarters of land-based plants and animals went extinct.

Scientists have long debated the cause of this calamity—which occurred before the era of dinosaurs—with possibilities including such disasters as meteor impacts.

Researchers led by Peter Ward of the University of Washington now think the answer is global warming caused by volcanic activity. Their findings are reported in Thursday's online edition of the journal Science.

They studied the Karoo Basin of South Africa, using chemical, biological and other evidence to relate layers of sediment there to similar layers in China that previous research has tied to the marine extinction at the same period.

Studying a 1,000-foot thick section of exposed sediment, Ward's team found evidence of a gradual extinction over about 10 million years followed by a sharp increase in extinction rate that lasted another 5 million years.

Ward's team believes the ex-

GREAT/ A18

ERIK ARAZAS

MENDIOLA MASSACRE ANNIVERSARY. Fueled by rage over the violent dispersals of union members at Hacienda Luisita, about 1,000 farmers let off steam in Mendiola on Friday to mark the anniversary of the Mendiola massacre when 13 protesters were killed. *(Story on Page A3.)*

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern sections of Northern and Central Luzon and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: CHONA GALANG, PDI RESEARCH/01/22/05

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

‘Road to Perdition’ trial starts

By Norman Bordadora

AERIAL photo of the controversial and scandal-ridden Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard.

BOY CABRIDO

FORMER top executives of the Public Estates Authority, officials of the Commission on Audit, and the private contractor implicated in the alleged overpricing of the P1.1-billion construction of the President Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard yesterday pleaded not guilty to the half-billion-peso graft case before the Sandiganbayan.

Former PEA general manager Carlos Doble, the principal accused in the case tagged by former PEA director and whistleblower Sulficio Tagud, failed to attend yesterday’s proceedings.

Defense lawyers cited health reasons: Doble was suffering from cancer.

On Jan. 12, the Supreme Court dismissed Doble’s motion to quash which paved the way for yesterday’s arraignment.

Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Teresita Leonardo de Castro also dismissed defense lawyers’ arguments for the deferment of yesterday’s arraignment, citing the SC dismissal of Doble’s motion to quash.

De Castro set the pretrial conference on March 28, 29 and 30.

Although the case was filed two years ago—in June 2003—the trial only started yesterday, after the accused filed separate motions—all seeking the dismissal of the case.

Sixteen PEA executives entered pleas of not guilty, among them former PEA chair Francisco San Juan, assistant general manger Jaime Millan, deputy manager Bernardo Viray and project management officer Raphael Pocholo Zorillo.

Also arraigned were COA auditors Manuela dela Paz, Benilda Mendoza and Ma. Cecilia de la Rama. They pleaded not guilty.

Jesusito Legaspi, president of JD Legaspi and the contractor of the allegedly overpriced portion of the controversial highway, also pleaded not guilty.

Despite their presence in court, accused former PEA directors Leo Padilla and Theron Victor Lacson were not arraigned because their lawyers were not available to represent them.

The Sandiganbayan ordered their lawyers to explain in five days their absence which resulted in the deferment of their client’s arraignment.

The Macapagal highway controversy arose from its allegedly overpriced construction that unduly cost the government P532.92 million “at the very least.”

The alleged overprice involved two portions of the boulevard—measuring about 2.3 kilometers—the Pacific Avenue and the opposite end of Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue that were assigned to JD Legaspi Construction, one of the three firms that constructed the project.

Sandigan slams door on Garcias

By Norman Bordadora

THE SANDIGANBAYAN yesterday declared Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia and his family to be in default and thus, they would not be allowed to present evidence in the hearing of the P143-million forfeiture case against them.

In a 17-page resolution of the fourth division of the antigraft court, the Sandiganbayan noted the failure of the Garcia family to file a reply—within 15 days—to the petition for forfeiture by the Office of the Ombudsman in November last year.

Instead, lawyers of the retired general filed a motion to dismiss and questioned the jurisdiction of the Sandiganbayan over civil cases for forfeiture of allegedly unlawfully acquired properties by government officials.

Court records showed that the summons was served to the Garcias together with copies of the petition on Nov. 2, 2004, which gave them until Nov. 17 to reply.

According to the resolution penned by Associate Justice Jose Hernandez, the Garcias’ motion to dismiss suffered from a fatal procedural defect since it disregarded the mandatory provision of Section 5, Rule 15.

It failed to meet the requirement that it must be set for hearing on a certain date and the hearing date must not be later than 10 days after the filing of the motion.

The court ruled that the Sandiganbayan had jurisdiction over petitions for forfeiture of unlawfully acquired properties under Republic Act 1379, as amended.

P1-B ‘ARMMNOMALY’

Where did GSIS premiums go? House sets probe

By Cynthia D. Balana

A TOTAL of 56 congressmen are seeking a formal inquiry into the missing P968.7 million in contributions to the Government Service Insurance System by teachers in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

A resolution filed by the three representatives of Akbayan and signed by 53 other lawmakers takes the Department of Education-ARMM to task for its failure to remit the compulsory contributions as well as its alleged irregular disbursement of funds.

The inquiry being sought will focus on the reasons for the failed remittance and on the possible safeguards to prevent, monitor and penalize similar occurrences.

The amount that was reported missing includes P495 million in personal contributions deducted from the salaries of more than 15,858 teachers and employees of the DepEd-ARMM from 1997 to 2003. The balance consists of the interest on the principal amount.

Akbayan Rep. Mario Aguja assailed the inaction of the concerned government agencies on the supposed irregularities.

In a privilege speech delivered during the plenary session last Tuesday, the 7th founding anniversary of Akbayan, Aguja said the DepEd-ARMM had severe corruption and leadership problems that needed immediate resolution.

“The country is losing many of its brightest teachers to other countries like the United States because of the promise of greater pay and a better life. Now we stand to lose more due to corruption and irregularities in the DepEd-ARMM,” he said.

Aguja said the alleged irregular disbursements of funds involving the unremitted contributions were made between March and July 2002.

One such disbursement, amounting to P283.2 million, was made through the Land Bank of the Philippines-Cotabato City branch, he said, adding:

“The unremitted GSIS contributions came from the blood and sweat of the teachers of Mindanao. It is only just that they benefit from [their contributions].”

According to the resolution, the ARMM public school teachers have for over five years been deprived of loans and other GSIS benefits, including retirement benefits in some cases.

Aguja said this was an injustice to the teachers who were already burdened by inadequate compensation.

He said DepEd-ARMM officials had acknowledged the unremitted contributions, but had not been asked to account for the money.

“Are we letting those people who took the money of our teachers off the hook? Shall we let these people laugh all the way to the bank?” Aguja said.

Purisima appointment signals start of big revamp

By Carlito Pablo

TRADE Secretary Cesar Purisima’s taking over the Department of Finance vice outgoing Secretary Juanita Amatong is the start of a major revamp in President Macapagal-Arroyo’s economic team.

So said Rep. Joey Salceda (Lakas-Kampi, Albay), the resident economist of the House of Representatives, who noted that Purisima’s appointment to the DOF was in response to the recent credit downgrade suffered by the country from the international credit rating firm Standard and Poor’s.

“This is not a coincidence,” Salceda said of Purisima’s movement to the DOF just days after the Standard and Poor’s credit downgrade.

“A revamp of the economic team is definitely a positive and proportional response to the downgrade,” added Salceda, chair of the House committee on economic affairs.

Salceda is also a member of President Macapagal-Arroyo’s economic managers group and is widely considered as influential in helping shape Ms. Arroyo’s strategic policies.

“For [so] long, there had been a crying need for a towering figure with both domestic and international stature in the Cabinet to initiate and articulate a coherent and cohesive public policy and fiscal strategy,” Salceda said.

Salceda said that the person needed at the DOF helm must have “communication skills and a grasp of functional issues,” adding that Purisima “fills that vacuum.”

“Purisima being the economic spokesman while being Secretary of DTI answers that need to reverse that seeming drift in fiscal initiatives and give it the big picture of what they all add up to,” Salceda said.

Palace defends Guingona: Age limit doesn’t apply in his case

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

MALACAÑANG yesterday defended the appointment of former Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. as ambassador to China, which the opposition wanted recalled purportedly because of his advanced age and his previous policy and political differences with President Macapagal-Arroyo.

“The former Vice President is fit for the job and will certainly sustain and promote the interest of our people in that sensitive and crucial diplomatic post,” Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a statement.

Former Sen. Francisco Tatad said Guingona’s appointment should be recalled because he is past the retirement age of 65. Guingona is 76.

Bunye, however, appealed to the opposition to give Guingona a chance to serve the country again.

“His appointment symbolizes the great and enduring importance we place on our relations with China,” Bunye said.

“Let us take this development in the spirit of unity and reconciliation as we deal with the steep challenges the country is facing,” Bunye said.

Environment Secretary Michael Defensor, who served as Ms Arroyo’s campaign spokesperson in the May 2004 election, said Guingona was not covered by the age limit for career diplomats.

“Well, the appointment of the Vice President is actually a political appointment to the Department of Foreign Affairs so I don’t think there is a limitation of age because this is not a career appointment,” Defensor said.

“Secondly, I hope the opposition would also look at the effort of the President to reach out to the former Vice President who was also with them before,” Defensor said.

“This is the time for unity and cooperation and the former Vice President, in his capacity as ambassador to China, can help our country and our economy by attracting investments from China,” Defensor added.

Guingona has mended fences with Ms Arroyo more than two years after he quit her Cabinet as foreign secretary due to “honest differences of opinion” mainly on her policy toward the United States.

Guingona also quit the ruling party Lakas-CMD when Ms Arroyo changed her mind about not running in the 2004 elections and became “adviser on governance and public administration” for opposition candidate Fernando Poe Jr.

Before being appointed ambassador to Beijing, Guingona served as Ms Arroyo’s adviser on economic development.

“As a former vice president, he will have the clout, the prestige and experience to deal with China and enhance our relationship with the Chinese government,” Defensor said.

Defensor said he does not expect the problem of policy differences between Guingona and the President to crop up again.

“I think before the policy difference was really because he was head of the DFA but in the case of heading the embassy in China it will be a question of facilitating and harmonizing the relationship.”

Gov’t says Visiting Forces pact benefits both US, RP

By TJ Burgonio

THE GOVERNMENT is bent on keeping the country’s Mutual Defense Treaty with the United States despite claims that the joint military exercises under the Visiting Forces Agreement have benefited Americans more than the Filipinos.

Undersecretary Zosimo Paredes II, executive director of the VFA Commission, yesterday ruled out a termination of the MDT, arguing that the country stood to lose more in its decades-long bilateral relations with its Western ally.

By losses, he was referring to the slew of military and economic aids the country is receiving from the US.

“We will lose the only defense and security agreement with the Americans. We will lose the aid because all of these are tied to this treaty. The $30-million economic pledge for Mindanao might be recalled [among others],” Paredes told reporters.

“We will damage our diplomatic relations. The security and diplomacy are tied up. We’ve had good relations with them. We stand to lose more than they if we abrogate the MDT,” he added.

Besides, Paredes pointed out, government troops have benefited a lot from the series of joint military exercises conducted over the years under the treaty.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, chair of the Senate foreign relations committee, on Friday asked defense and foreign affairs officials to review the VFA and determine whether the country should terminate the 1999 agreement.

She argued that this has benefited more Americans than their local counterparts and that it was based on the MDT of 1951, and hence, was “not applicable in the present political configuration of 2005.”

Special masses in 500 churches to mark FPJ’s 40th day

By Fe Zamora

FROM Tuguegarao to Tacurong. And let’s not forget Australia, USA, Hong Kong and Canada.

At 6 p.m. today, some 500 churches here and abroad will hold a special Mass to mark the 40th day of mourning for defeated presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr.

The fractious political opposition that Poe led in the last elections will commemorate the traditional last day of mourning in three venues.

As expected, the police is on red alert status, anticipating a repeat of the huge crowds that attended Poe’s funeral march on Dec. 22.

On the eve of the actor’s funeral, Malacañang went as far as saying that a coup plot was in the offing. Save for a few cases of women who fainted from the heat, and some fans who lost their slippers, the funeral march ended rather peacefully.

“As usual, they think we will resort to violence,” Rez Cortez, chairman of the National Council of Concerned Volunteers (NCCV), said yesterday.

Poe’s bosom buddy, former President Joseph Estrada, has scheduled an 11 a.m. Mass at his Tanay resthouse where he has been staying while awaiting trial for massive plunder.

Other opposition leaders, led by House Minority Leader Francisco Escudero (NPC, Sorsogon), will attend Holy Mass at the Edsa Shrine, where a people power uprising forced Estrada to leave Malacañang in January 2001.

Escudero will be joined by Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, former Sen. Gregorio “Gringo” Honasan, former Agrarian Reform Secretary Horacio “Boy” Morales and other legislators who belong to the opposition.

Estrada, Escudero, Binay, Honasan and Morales comprise the opposition suspected to be a “shadow government in waiting.”

Escudero said Poe’s widow would not be joining them at the Edsa Shrine. “Last I was told, she would commemorate it with the family,” he said in a text message to the INQUIRER.

Poe’s legion of followers, meanwhile, will gather at the actor’s grave at the North Cemetery for the flower offering at 6 a.m., and the blessing of the tomb at 3 p.m. by Fr. Sonny Ramirez.

According to Cortez, there will be a 5 p.m. procession starting at the North Cemetery, going all the way to the Sto. Domingo Church, where there will be a concelebrated Mass at 7 p.m.

A CARETAKER gives the final touch to the tomb of Fernando Poe Jr. at the North Cemetery in Manila.

JOAN BONDOC

Luisita farmers, police clash near Mendiola

A STRIKING worker at Hacienda Luisita practices his markmanship with a slingshot on a cardboard target marked AFP and PNP outside the Central Azucarera de Tarlac. REM ZAMORA

By Leila B. Salaverria

AROUND 1,000 militant farmers clashed yesterday with anti-riot policemen near Chino Roces Bridge in Manila on the eve of the 18th anniversary of the Mendiola Massacre.

Still seething with rage over the violent dispersal of farmworkers at Hacienda Luisita, the protesters marched from España Boulevard toward Chino Roces Bridge, the site of the infamous massacre, but were blocked by anti-riot police at the corner of Nicanor Reyes St. and C.M. Recto Ave. in Manila.

In the ensuing clash between the marchers and police, both sides suffered injuries, mostly bruises and scratches, but nothing serious.

After about 10 minutes of scuffle, the marchers overpowered the police and managed to breach the latter's line of defense. The marchers stopped along C.M. Recto and held negotiations with top police officials.

The marchers were eventually allowed to proceed to the Chino Roces Bridge to stage their protest action.

As expected, the militants blamed the government for the 1987 Mendiola Massacre and the violent dispersal of farmers at Hacienda Luisita in November where at least seven people were killed.

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo also said President Macapagal-Arroyo may still have the chance to set things right with regard to the Nov. 16, 2004 Hacienda Luisita killings especially since she failed to help the victims of the Mendiola Massacre.

"My advice for her is to stop the dispersal there and persuade the hacienda management to return to the negotiating table," Ocampo said in an interview. "This is the chance of GMA to answer for the Hacienda Luisita massacre so that the farmers who died there would not wait for more than 18 years to receive justice."

On Jan. 22, 1987, policemen killed thirteen farmers who staged a rally in Mendiola to seek better treatment from the government and the implementation of the agrarian reform program.

Danilo Ramos of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas said the President would only be able to show her sincerity in helping farmers by giving them their own land to till.

He said the Hacienda Luisita workers had already rejected the project where they were given stocks in the hacienda instead of land.

"The protests are getting louder because the farmers continue to be oppressed," Ramos said.

Tensions remain high at the Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac because the workers and the management have failed to resolve their labor dispute.

Filipinos in Iraq advised to seek help

SOME 6,000 Filipino workers in Iraq are vulnerable to abductions and attacks ahead of the country's post-Saddam elections and should seek help from the Philippine Embassy, the foreign department said yesterday.

While evacuation at this stage is "farfetched and not imminent," the Philippine special envoy to the Middle East, Roy Cimatu, said Filipinos should immediately contact the embassy for "proper safety and security measures."

The message applied especially to those not working in military installations.

"These OFWs (Overseas Filipino Workers) are most vulnerable to abduction, like what happened to Mr. Tarongoy," Cimatu said, in reference to Filipino accountant, Robert Tarongoy, who remains in the hands of Iraqi militants more than two months after he and an American were kidnapped.

The government has said it is working closely with officials on the ground for his release and that Tarongoy was still alive.

Cimatu noted Filipino officials are aware that they face "numerous and serious challenges" in securing the workers.

In July the Philippine government withdrew its troops serving with US-led coalition forces in Iraq to save the life of Filipino truck driver Angelo de la Cruz, held hostage by militants.

"As is widely known, the security situation in Iraq is becoming worse as the election to be held on Jan. 30, 2005 approaches because of the plan of insurgents to derail the electoral process," Cimatu said.

He warned that the number one threat is rocket or mortar fire from militants directed at US bases, where Filipinos are employed as support staff. *AFP*

RP bishops tackle impact of super typhoons

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE COUNTRY'S bishops gather for their first national assembly this year literally in the aftermath of a storm.

The 90th plenary assembly of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, scheduled to open late last night, will focus on the impact of the recent super typhoons that hit the Philippines and the tsunami that ravaged at least six countries in Asia.

CBCP president Fernando Capalla said the bishops would be discussing the efforts being made by the different dioceses to help victims of calamities.

"It is our moral obligation to help. Rehabilitation of the affected areas has not been finished. That will take a long time," Capalla said in an earlier interview.

The CBCP-National Secretariat for Social Action, Justice and Peace is mobilizing relief and rehabilitation assistance to the 12 most affected communities in Luzon.

The NASSA has received around P26 million in donations, mostly from foreign organizations, in the past two months. The amount will be used to buy rice and medicines, and build houses for displaced families.

Around 85 bishops from all over the country are expected to attend the plenary assembly of the CBCP, the official organization of the Catholic hierarchy in the country.

The plenary was scheduled to officially open last night at the Pope Pius Center in Manila, following the bishops' two-day retreat.

"The other topics for discussion will depend on the reports of the (episcopal) commissions," he said.

Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales earlier said that ecology was an important issue to be tackled, particularly the need for more ecology advocates among the Catholic clergy.

Capalla said that the appeal aired by militant farmers and fishermen's groups for CBCP support on the proposed P125 wage hike in Congress could also be discussed "indirectly."

He said it was not in the agenda, which was finalized last month, but some Episcopal commissions may bring up the wage issue.

Mabaskog gid ang Globe sa Iloilo!

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Jan 23: Smallville Hotel

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Pols behind illegal logging

From page A1

He said this represented the amount of logs being cut in Mauban in one day. He added that General Nakar officials had admitted that 75 percent of their constituents were involved in logging.

3 millionaires

Defensor said former Quezon Rep. Manolet Lavides, a certain Mayor Plaza of Agusan del Sur and Mayor Cynthia de la Cruz of Salvador Benedicto, Negros Occidental, had also been charged with illegal logging.

He said other politicians from Quezon and Agusan del Sur were being investigated, as well as three "millionaires" whom he neither named nor described.

Four more people were charged with illegal logging in Agusan del Sur—Jun-Jun Hidgano, Sonny Barrios, Victoria D. Plaza and another person whose name could not be recalled by Ben Tumaliuan, executive director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for the Caraga region, who had filed the cases.

Hidgano is the son of Mayor Irenea Hidgano of Torento, Agusan del Sur, while Barrios is the brother-in-law of Bunawan Mayor Gilbert Elorde and environment officer of the municipal government, Tumaliuan told the INQUIRER.

He said the mayors were not included in the charges pending further investigation.

He added that P2 million worth of logs were seized from Hidgano, P1.5 million from Barrios, and P3 million from Plaza.

3 visits

Defensor said he visited Avellaneda three times after the series of storms hit Quezon to ask for the mayor's cooperation in identifying the illegal loggers in his area.

"[But] he was not saying anything," Defensor recalled.

He said that he spent two nights in Avellaneda's area to investigate, and that just before he was to return to Manila, people approached him with information.

"The reason why you cannot get anything from him is, he is the one running the illegal [activity]," he quoted his informants as saying.

According to the informants, who said they had been selling logs to Avellaneda and his brother Carding, the mayor arrests loggers who are engaging in separate operations.

"They said they are willing to come out and file cases," Defensor said of his informants. He read to reporters portions of their affidavits.

Defensor also said Avellaneda recently went to his office but that he was in China.

The mayor is now apparently singing a different tune, saying he was not the operator and that he was willing to name those engaged in illegal logging in Quezon.

Defensor said Avellaneda had been charged with violations of Republic Act No. 3019 (or the anti-illegal logging law), as well as graft, gross negligence, dereliction of duty, and violations of the code of ethical standards for government officials and employees.

Lavides arrested

"There are some other personalities that we will charge before the Ombudsman and the DILG (Department of Interior and Local Governments) for administrative cases," Defensor said.

He said Avellaneda and Lavides were members of Lakas-CMD.

"The areas of illegal logging are really in Quezon and Agusan. But we are not really looking at the political affiliations," Defensor said, adding that there was no deliberate effort to spare the opposition either.

"The problem is, politicians switch parties," he said. "Mayor Avellaneda, if I'm not mistaken, was with the opposition during the past elections."

Defensor said Lavides was arrested last Wednesday after a search warrant was issued. He said that about P1 million worth of logs were seized from Lavides' sawmill, and that five six-wheel trucks were needed to haul the logs.

According to Defensor, Lavides owns the Superlines bus company. Recently, a number of women whom he had allegedly forced to wear his campaign vests filed a case against him.

"We have reports about many financiers in Infanta and Real because the logs from General Nakar are brought to these areas. They (Lavides and others) are financing the cutting and gathering of logs, and we already filed the case against former Congressman Lavides," Defensor said.

"We were able to cut the operations of the financiers in Mauban and now we are going to ... General Nakar to pinpoint the personalities involved. We're not done with General Nakar; we still need to build up cases on several personalities who are reportedly engaging in financing and coordinating illegal logging in the area," he said.

He also said another politician from Quezon was still being investigated.

Top 10 cases

Apart from these recent cases, Defensor released a list of "top 10 illegal logging cases filed" in various regions, involving around P8 million worth of logs.

But he said P50 million worth of logs had been seized since the government launched a heightened campaign against the illegal cutting of trees.

From Quezon and Aurora alone, he said, they were able to retrieve more than 44,000 cubic meters of logs and inventoried 8,000 pieces of logs.

He said some of these logs would be processed and given to the families that had lost their homes. The rest would be given to the education, social welfare, public works and health departments.

Life imprisonment

Defensor said he was pushing for stiffer penalties for illegal logging. The present law provides only for a six-year jail term and a fine equivalent to the amount of logs seized from the offender, he noted.

He said he wanted illegal loggers punished with life imprisonment.

The President had accused communist rebels of involvement in illegal logging, and appointed Corpus to go after them.

But so far, no communist rebel has landed on Defensor's list.

He said it was difficult to pin down the communist rebels because they were just exacting "revolutionary taxes" from legal loggers.

Shun Americans' wasteful lifestyle, Filipinos urged

From page A1

"The American way of life—whose model of overconsumption is romanticized in these parts as the American dream—has been correctly characterized by the environmental movement as unsustainable," Hernandez said.

"An American consumes 22 times more than the average citizen from the developing world. If we are to sustain such a wasteful lifestyle, the earth might not be able to sustain our needs for the next 50 years," Hernandez said.

"If everyone were to live like an American, we would need to consume at least six planets in order to survive. Perhaps this is why Nasa and the US government, for that matter, were overjoyed with the prospect of life on Mars," he said.

Delivered a day after the inaugurals of reelected US President George W. Bush, this humorous jab at First World excesses got smiling nods from the crowd attending "Karangalan," a conference cum festival charting new "visions" for the country's future from a non-governmental standpoint.

The remarks were made at the opening program of this three-day affair, which lined up talks, workshops and cultural presentations that organizers hope will project the positive, albeit, less publicized accomplishments of Filipinos, from the international stage to the poorest barrios.

Network of NGOs

The event attracted mostly civic volunteers, cultural workers, academicians, and community organizers—the NGO set.

Hosted by the CCP, "Karangalan" was the brainchild of another globally recognized Filipino, Nicanor Perlas, winner of the 2003 Right Livelihood Award, which is considered the "Alternative Nobel Prize."

In an interview, Perlas said the event was laying the ground for an "independent network" of NGOs working to arrest what he observed to be "the Filipinos' waning self-confidence" to achieve or at least continue to live as responsible citizens.

This was for the taxi driver, he said, "who started out being law-abiding but realized it's not worth it after seeing fellow drivers violate traffic rules and traffic officials accept bribes."

It was for farmers who "felt the government doesn't know them" or for professionals thinking of migrating abroad because of their "increasing cynicism toward our political leaders."

Perlas, president of the Center for Alternative Development Initiatives, said Karangalan workshops will open communication lines between various "progressive forces so that our politicians will soon be hearing a bigger voice."

Pro-liberalization hit

Yesterday's opening program also heard from Prof. Walden Bello, Perlas' fellow Right Livelihood Awardee and whose well-applauded speech mainly assailed the government's pro-liberalization policies.

Bello lashed at the "neoliberal and market fundamentalist policies" that Presidents from Corazon Aquino to Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had adhered to.

The technocrats who had pushed these policies—favoring free trade, lower tariff and reduced government regulation of industries—promised "growth, prosperity and the end of inequality," he recalled.

Throes of crisis

"But the result ... is now clear for all to see: Nothing less than an unmitigated disaster. We have been converted into a food-importing country. Employment in agriculture has dropped precipitously. Whole sectors of our agriculture, such as corn, are in the throes of crisis owing to imports being dumped on us," Bello said.

FACTS ON THE CENTRAL AZUCARERA DE TARLAC & HACIENDA LUISITA LABOR DISPUTES

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) has issued its decision to resolve the labor dispute at the Central Azucarera de Tarlac, restore industrial peace, and ease the simmering tension in the area.

Unfortunately, some quarters are trying to further muddle up the issue. To set the record straight, the DOLE acted based on the rule of law.

Facts of the Case

- Last November 6, 2004, 87 out of the 700 workers of Central Azucarera de Tarlac went on strike. A series of conciliation meetings was conducted by the Department of Labor and Employment, the last of which was held last December 13, 2004.
- After receiving the management's and the labor union's position papers, DOLE issued its decision last January 14, 2005.
- Some of the striking CAT workers have returned to work. Others can follow within five days from the time they received their copy of the DOLE decision. The 5-day period ended Thursday, January 20.
- DOLE has directed the CAT management to immediately accept the striking union members without retaliatory action.
- DOLE also directed the CAT management to immediately pay the unpaid wages and other benefits due the striking workers which have accrued by them prior to the strike.

The Economic Package Granted by DOLE to CAT Workers

- The DOLE awarded to each covered employee a wage increase of P15/day retroactive July 1, 2004 up to June 30, 2006, the fourth and fifth years of their CBA.
- It also granted a one-time lump sum payment of P12,500 to augment the workers' wage increase.

Hacienda Luisita and Central Azucarera de Tarlac are Two Distinct Entities

- There are two separate companies, Hacienda Luisita Inc. (HLI) and Central Azucarera de Tarlac with two distinct labor disputes. The strike involves the workers of Central Azucarera de Tarlac.
- The case involving HLI and the United Luisita Workers Union (ULWU) is now with the National Labor Relations Commission.

An Appeal to Striking Workers and their Sympathizers

- When 87 CAT workers went on strike last November, the livelihood of more than 600 other fellow workers as well as the entire sugar industry were adversely affected. The DOLE decision was issued after CAT and CATLU were unable to resolve the dispute through negotiation.
- The CATLU filed with the DOLE last Wednesday, January 19, 2005, its motion for reconsideration. The DOLE will immediately act on this motion.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
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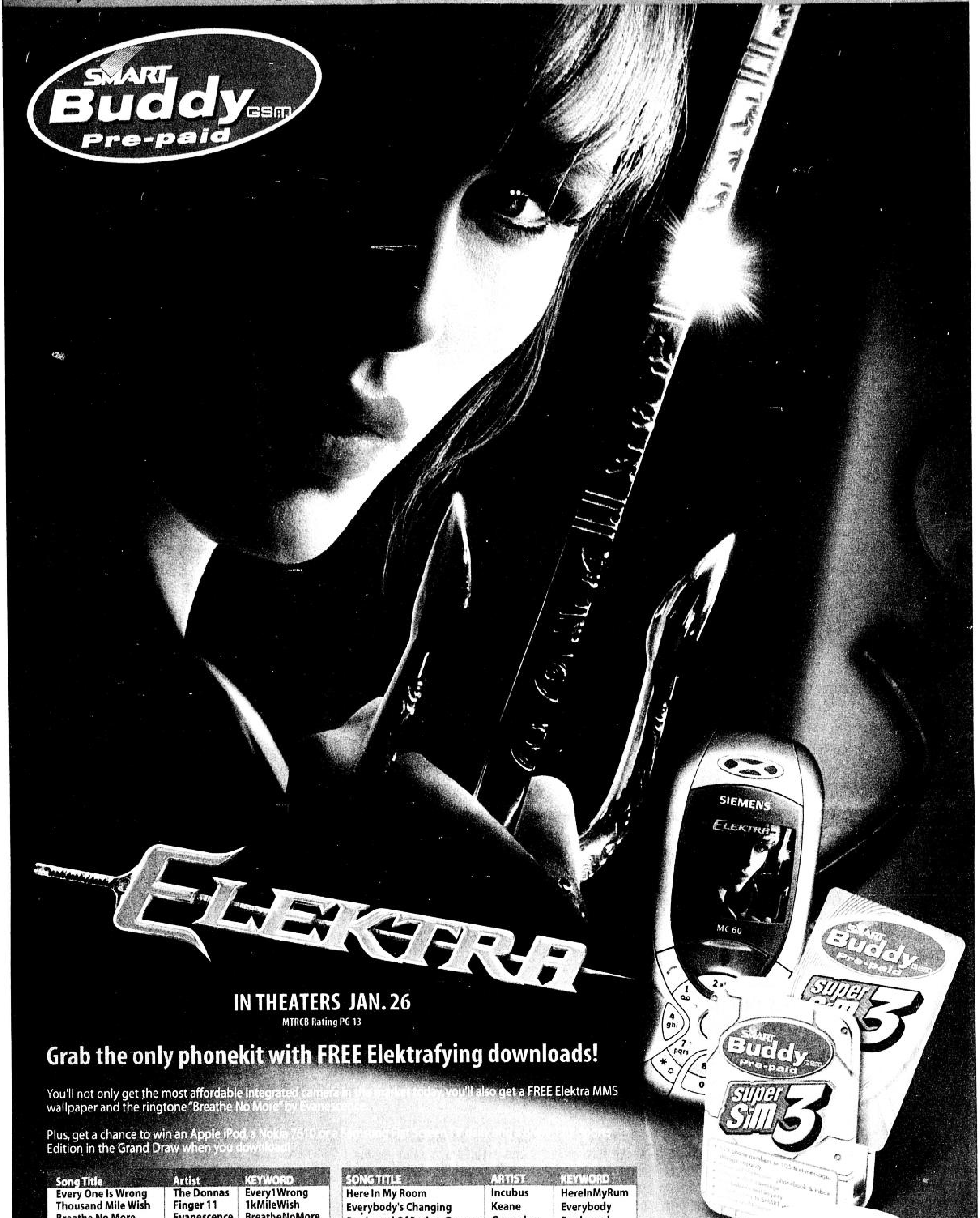

IN THEATERS JAN. 26
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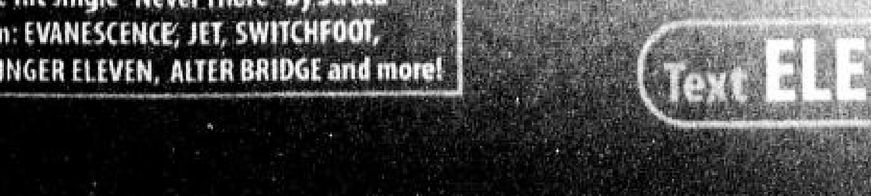

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Miriam goes ballistic over Napocor debts

From page A1

debt, Santiago disclosed that Napocor has debts amounting to P844.74 billion.

'Others'

Santiago said this amount was listed among Napocor's debts in the audit report of the Commission on Audit for 2003. The amount was placed under the item "others," she noted.

Napocor corporate communications manager Dennis Gana said the state firm would clarify the "others" entry in due time.

But a source from Napocor said it has something to do with the accounting process that Napocor is going through right now. "We're still in the process of segregating the assets and liabilities related to the transmission and generation businesses. The 'others' entry may be related to that," the source said.

Transco

Until 2002, Napocor's transmission and generation businesses were listed under a single book of accounts. But since the state firm's transmission business was spun off into a separate firm, the National Transmission Corp. (Transco), some of its assets and liabilities were still booked in Napocor's accounting logs.

The Napocor source said the power firm has yet to finish segregating and assigning assets and liabilities to Napocor and to Transco. These assets and liabilities would then be transferred to the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (Psalm), the government body tasked to manage and privatize the assets and liabilities of Napocor and Transco.

Budget cut

At a briefing for reporters, Santiago disclosed that if her committee members would not stop her, she intends to propose a cut in the DOE budget.

"This is in order to punish them," she said in Filipino. "It could not be always that they have the same appropriations and then there are anomalies."

Santiago said the bulk of Napocor's P1.3 trillion debts could have come from debts owed to independent power producers that were contracted during the administration of President Fidel Ramos to generate power to overcome the power crisis that hit the country in the '90s.

"*Hindi utang sa dayuhan, saan galing eto? Bakit nagkautang pa ng ganitong halaga*? (It's not foreign debt, where did this come from? Why did Napocor incur such huge debts?) " she told reporters. "*Ang aming naging* consensus *sa* subcommittee, *ang utang na ito ay galing sa* IPP (Our consensus in the subcommittee is that this debt came from IPPs)," she added.

Santiago said energy officials were not clear on their answers on this.

She said Napocor officials did not include those debts incurred by the national government from IPPs in its stated debts but had separated them instead.

Granddaddy of IPPs

"*Sino ang pinakalolo at ama ng* IPP contracts? (Who is the grandfather and father of IPP contracts?)" she asked. "*Si* Fidel Ramos *kaya dahil kay* FVR, *nagkautang ang gobyerno ng dagdag na* P844 billion *na hanggang ngayon ay hindi nababayaran at hindi nila sinasabi ang totoo?*. (Is it Fidel Ramos because it was during FVR's term that the government incurred the additional P844 billion debt which has remained unpaid to date and they are not telling the truth?)"

At one point during the hearing, she said had the IPP been a person, it should have been shot 844 times "because it caused losses of billions of pesos."

Rush to sell

Santiago said she would open to the media the next Joint Congressional Power Commission that would look into what she noted was the apparent rush in the sale of the Masinloc coal-fired plant in Zambales. The commission is set to hold a meeting before the end of the month.

During a large part of the hearing, Santiago grilled energy officials on the P330-million budget allocation being sought by the department.

She lost her temper when DOE officials sought a P53-million budget for the establishment of a bureau called the Electric Power Industry Management Bureau, as well as P4.5 million for confidential and intelligence expenses, among others.

"Where are you spending the confidential expenses for?" an irate Santiago asked, noting that the DOE allocated P1.3 million in intelligence funds last year.

Perez explained that the intelligence budget was needed in the fight against oil smuggling, prompting the senator to retort that the DOE could always report this kind of incident to the police, military or even the Bureau of Customs.

Santiago pointed out as well that the DOE did not even make any headway in the oil smuggling problem last year and now it was seeking a bigger budget..

Rewarding the incompetent

"This will be rewarding the incompetent," she said.

Later on, Santiago told the hearing she was not being personal with her comments as she admitted that she was "mad at the system that has made the Philippines the number 2 corrupt nation in the world."

She said the DOE should be held accountable for the performance of government-owned energy corporations like Napocor, National Electrification Administration and the Philippine National Oil Corp.

These energy corporations, she said, do not get any budget allocations from the national government and "finance most of their operations and capital expenditures through corporate borrowings."

Santiago disclosed that most of these corporate borrowings are in turn guaranteed by the government. The Department of Finance ends up lending them money, she said.

"That's why I'm so angry about this whole system," she said. "Has no DOE secretary thought about this structure? *Biro mo ang lakilaki ng sweldo nila*, corporate perks and privileges." (Their salaries are so huge.)

Corrupt system

She said it would be the ordinary Filipino who would end up paying for this government guarantee, because the government would raise the cost of electricity.

"Gentlemen of the energy sector, has this never bothered your conscience?" she asked in an angry voice. "Shall we always engage in this futile nominal exercises of budget hearings, saving a few millions here and few millions there when the system itself is corrupt?"

Santiago also said she would file a bill so that energy corporations would be transformed from private corporations to government agencies so they can be scrutinized by Congress, including their expenditures.

She said that Napocor, for instance, had never been subjected to scrutiny from legislators.

Part of the job

Interviewed after the hearing, Perez said he understood the things that Santiago raised during the hearing and that the grilling he got from her was part of the job.

On the intelligence funds being sought by the department, Perez said that it was the BOC which asked DOE's help against oil smuggling.

He underscored the need for government to sell the plants of Napocor and the privatization of the Transco.

Perez assured that the privatization process would be "open, transparent and competitive" to ensure that the government get the best deal.

Pinoys took P7B worth of fake drugs last year

By Michael Lim Ubac

FILIPINOS consumed about P7 billion worth—or 1.4 million kilograms—of fake drugs last year.

"This is shocking .... This is too much," Roberto Pagdanganan, president of the Philippine International Trading Corp. (PITC), told the Senate committee on health.

Pagdanganan, a former tourism secretary, gave the estimate of the magnitude of counterfeit drugs brought into the country by commercial ships and airfreight during a testimony before the Senate committee on health on Thursday.

Pagdanganan underlined the urgency of lowering the high costs of medicines locally.

"We're working very hard on this," Pagdanganan said. "Perhaps it becomes attractive for some people to smuggle (fake drugs), or to go against the law, precisely (because) they make a lot of money, because the prices here are so high compared to sources like India."

Worldwide trade in fake drugs was estimated at P32 billion in 2004, according to data submitted to committee chair Sen. Pia Cayetano.

The senator said she was amazed that, of the 1.4 million kilograms of fake drugs which entered the Philippines and distributed to pharmacists last year, only two bags were confiscated by the Bureau of Customs.

Sold in sari-sari stores

Cayetano said most of the counterfeit drugs were sold in sari-sari (general) and small drug stores, and urged the public to buy only from reputable drugstores and pharmaceutical companies.

Taking fake drugs is not by itself necessarily directly fatal, lawyer and committee staff member Romando Artes said, citing testimony of health officials during the hearing.

"But they admitted that taking fake drugs has ill-effects. These drugs may not be poisonous, but it does not cure the disease, further prolonging the sufferings of the patient," Artes said.

Placebo effect

He said that health officials cited the case of patients taking a certain drug for hypertension to lower one's blood pressure.

"But the fake drug does not lower the blood pressure. It only gives a placebo effect (false feeling of relief). This would further aggravate his health condition," said Artes.

He said counterfeit drugs were less potent than genuine ones because they contained less dosage than what appeared on their labels.

"[They] will further prolong the suffering because the patient is not taking the right amount of drugs as prescribed by his or her doctor," Artes said.

For example, Artes said counterfeit paracetamol brands only contained 100 grams of pain relieving chemicals compared to the 500 grams of the genuine brands.

Drugs from India, Pakistan

Customs officials identified India and Pakistan as the primary sources of the fake pharmaceutical products.

Cayetano called on the Department of Health, BOC, PITC and the Drug Stores Association of the Philippines (DSAP) to take responsibility in disseminating information necessary to combat the illegal trade. *With a report from Heidi Lenffer, trainee*

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20 million in 20 years: No. of 'high blood' Pinoys

By Blanche S. Rivera

AS MANY as 20 million Filipinos are projected to suffer from hypertension in the next 20 years, raising the prevalence of complications like heart disease and stroke.

"Among the relatively young population of this country, 20 million would have unacceptable high blood pressure by 2025," said Anthony Michael Heagerty, president of the European Council of Hypertension. Quoting from the latest study on hypertension in the medical journal Lancet, he said 29 percent of the global population would have the ailment by then.

Heagerty made his remarks during the launch yesterday of Olmesartan Medoxomil, the newest antihypertensive medicine being marketed by the drug firm Pfizer.

The latest research by the Department of Science and Technology found that two out of 10 Filipinos aged 20 and above are hypertensive.

The Philippine Society of Hypertension estimates that as many as 12.6 million Filipinos have the ailment but less than half of them are aware of it, and even less seek treatment for it.

"It is a largely silent disease. Unless they have a circulatory breakdown, many do not realize the gravity of having hypertension," Heagerty said.

Hypertensive individuals aged 40 to 70 years old are twice more likely to suffer a heart ailment with every 20mmHg rise in the acceptable blood pressure.

International societies agree that a blood pressure of over 140/90 indicates hypertension and requires treatment or control.

Stroke, kidney disease and eye problems are the common complications of hypertension.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, January 22, 2005
2nd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading:	Heb 9:2-3,11-14
Gospel:	Mark 3:20-21

Jesus came with his disciples into the house. The crowd began to gather again and they couldn't even have a meal. Knowing what was happening his relatives came to take charge of him: "He is out of his mind," they said.

Commentary

Everywhere Jesus goes he is mobbed. He has touched something in people like a raw nerve. His relatives come to "take charge of him"—in the sense of getting him in check. They say "he's out of his mind"—they too are afraid of him and the reaction he is stirring up publicly. But they are afraid for themselves and want to stop him and his preaching of conversion and the Good News of God to the poor and the lost sheep. It seems that Jesus has trouble with his family! Mother, cousins, aunts and uncles, in-laws? Extended families were sprawling in those days and you were associated with your blood kin and they with you, whether you agreed with them or not.

Today our families are sourced in the waters of baptism and the blood of the cross and we are bound in the Word of the Gospel and to the poor in the Body of Christ. Are we ashamed of those who publicly are associated with the poor, the sick, those who fall from grace, outcasts and those who society thinks are expendable and problematic? Do we think that prophets and those who associate with prisoners, those with AIDS/HIV, those without insurance, living on the street and of other races and religions are "out of their mind?" Are we related to Jesus really?

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

POLITICAL LAW (CONSTITUTIONAL LAW)—Expropriation; Just compensation—Just compensation is defined as the full and fair equivalent of the property taken from its owner by the expropriator. The measure is not the taker's gain, but the owner's loss. To compensate is to render something which is equal in value to that taken or received. The word "just" is used to intensify the meaning of the word "compensation"; to convey the idea that the equivalent to be rendered for the property taken shall be real, substantial, full, ample. In eminent domain or expropriation proceedings, the general rule is that the just compensation which the owner of condemned property is entitled to is the market value. Market value is "that sum of money which a person desirous but not compelled to buy, and an owner willing but not compelled to sell, would agree on as a price to be given and received therefor." The just compensation is determined as of the date of the taking of the property or the filing of the complaint whichever came first. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Ynares-Santiago, First Division, Bank of the Philippine Islands vs Court of Appeals, G. R. No. 160890, November 10, 2004]

BY R. B. VERA

Cops sound alarm: 'Mary Jane' is back!

By Christian V. Esguerra

YOU'RE not hallucinating: "Mary Jane" is back.

Marijuana, a popular drug during the turbulent '60s and '70s, is slowly taking over shabu as the poor man's drug of choice in the country, a top Philippine National Police official said yesterday.

Most of the country's 3.4 million drug users now prefer marijuana because it's cheaper, according to Deputy Director General Ricardo de Leon, the PNP's antidrug czar.

Marijuana costs P200 per gram while shabu costs P6,000 per gram, the official said in a press conference. "This is why we're intensifying our campaign to uproot marijuana plantations nationwide."

On Thursday, the government uprooted some 297,000 fully grown marijuana worth P55 million in Ilocos, he added.

The price of shabu, previously the top choice of local drug users, skyrocketed after the government launched a crackdown against illegal drug syndicates in June 2003.

Some 14 shabu laboratories and warehouses had been dismantled nationwide. Last month, three facilities were shut down in Davao City.

Although 19,000 pushers were arrested last year, De Leon admitted there were now more drug users nationwide.

"As the population grows, demand also increases," he told reporters.

The latest count of drug users set to be released by the Dangerous Drugs Board this year would show just that, he said.

Users are aged between 22 and 29 and there was one female for every 12 drug dependents, De Leon said.

Users were shifting from shabu to marijuana, thinking this was the lesser evil.

"Shabu has a very strong and long-term effect," explained Rodolfo Caisip, deputy director of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency. "It will destroy your brain and, eventually, it will kill you."

In contrast, marijuana is a "hallucinogen" that merely allows a user to "float," the official said. "Its effect is mild compared with shabu."

Authorities are also faced with the problem of where to send drug users for rehabilitation.

It has now become impossible to fit 3.4 million users in 66 government and private rehabilitation centers nationwide, according to De Leon.

These facilities can accommodate only 8,000 drug users for a regular six-month program at any given time, he explained.

The government hopes to solve this problem by forfeiting assets of convicted drug lords and converting them into rehabilitation centers.

"We're trying to follow the United States model wherein assets of drug convicts are seized by the government at least one month after conviction," he added.

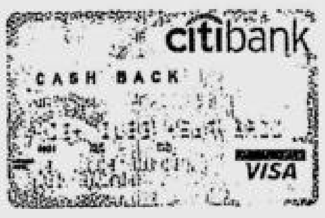
De Leon's predecessor, PNP Director General Edgar Aglipay, had shown the way by initiating the forfeiture of a mansion authorities had raided a year ago in Tanza, Cavite. The mansion is now a rehab center.

Efforts like this would ostensibly help the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, the main government agency working against illegal drugs, rid the country of banned substances by 2010.

De Leon said the goal could be attained on "certain conditions."

"We really have to put our resources together," he said. "We will be needing the help of all government agencies, including the community."

De Leon said authorities were now educating families in dealing with relatives who had been treated in rehabilitation centers. Barangay Anti-Drug Abuse Councils were key in this program, he said.



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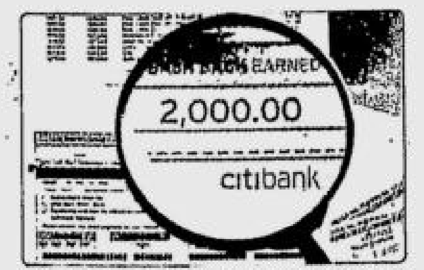

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

WHO: Bird flu may evolve into pandemic

GENEVA—The bird flu virus endemic in Asia appears to be evolving in ways that increasingly favor the start of a deadly human influenza outbreak, the World Health Organization warned on Thursday.

The situation "may resemble that leading to the 1918 pandemic," which killed more than 40 million people, it said in its latest report on preparedness for an influenza pandemic.

The United Nations health agency—which fears that the H5N1 bird flu virus could mutate into a deadly human form—again urged countries and drugs companies to speed development and production of a vaccine.

The death toll in Asia stands at 38—26 in Vietnam and 12 in Thailand—from the latest outbreak, but so far there are no signs that the virus is being transmitted easily between people, the agency's greatest fear.

But recent epidemiological and laboratory studies revealed unusual features that "suggest that the virus may be evolving in ways that increasingly favor the start of a pandemic," the agency said in a report to its bi-annual executive board, which is meeting this week.

The WHO has forecast a potential death toll of two million to seven million as a "best case scenario" for an outbreak, which it says is overdue. The last one, which claimed between one million and four million lives, was in 1968.

The deadly virus has become "hardier," surviving several days longer in the environment. Evidence also suggested that the virus is expanding its range of mammal hosts, including captive tigers and experimentally-infected domestic cats, it added.

Migratory birds and domestic ducks show no symptoms but excrete the highly pathogenic virus, indicating an "important silent role in maintaining transmission."

The current concentration of outbreaks of avian influenza in poultry in rural areas, where most households maintain free-ranging flocks, and ducks and chickens mingle freely, was of particular concern, according to the report.

"Such outbreaks may escape detection, are difficult to control and increase the likelihood of human exposures," it said.

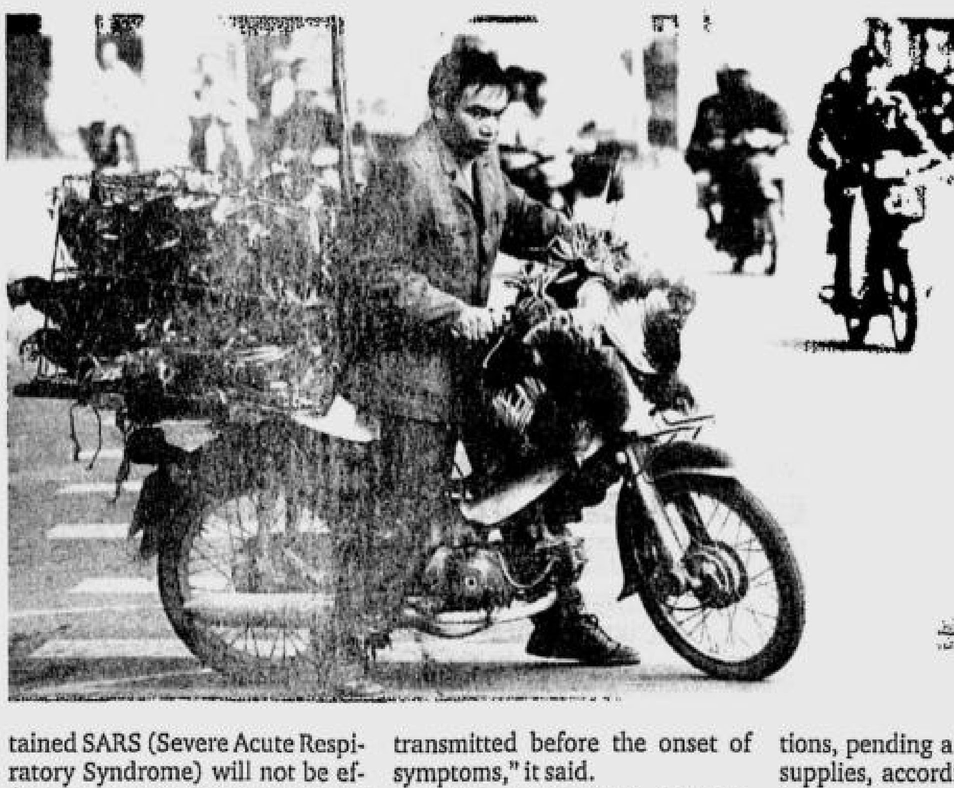
It was difficult to give rural farmers and their families—"the most important risk group"—realistic advice on how to avoid exposure, the WHO said.

Taken together, changes in the virus and disease had created "multiple opportunities for a pandemic virus to emerge," either through exchange of genetic material between human and avian viruses or through a more gradual process of mutation.

Rapid international spread was certain once a pandemic influenza virus appeared, according to the report.

"Many of the public health interventions that successfully contained SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) will not be effective against a disease that is far more contagious, has a short incubation period, and can be transmitted before the onset of symptoms," it said.

Travel restrictions, quarantines and tracing of cases will be the main tools to protect populations, pending a boost in vaccine supplies, according to the WHO. "Each day gained could mean an additional five million doses of vaccines," it said. *AP*



A TRADER carries chicken for sale on his motorcycle in Hanoi, Jan. 17. Seven people have died of bird flu in Southern Vietnam where some 170,000 birds have been culled since late December. AFP

US refuses to let Guantanamo man cross airspace

WASHINGTON—Washington has refused to allow an Australian terrorism suspect due to be freed from the Guantanamo prison in Cuba to be flown across the United States because Canberra will not shackle him, an Australian official said on Thursday.

The United States has agreed under pressure from its ally to free Mamdouh Habib, who has been held at the US naval base for almost three years as an "enemy combatant" on suspicion he helped al-Qaida. Washington has brought no charges against the Australian but says it still regards him as a "threat."

"The United States has a requirement that he does not return home via the United States," Matt Francis, a spokesperson at the Australian Embassy in Washington, said.

The United States sparked criticism around the world, including from major allied governments, by shackling and blindfolding detainees it transported to Guantanamo when it started the prison for terrorism suspects in 2002.

Habib was arrested while crossing from Pakistan into Afghanistan three weeks after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

Human rights groups have urged Australia to investigate claims he was tortured while in US custody.

Australia's Attorney General Philip Ruddock has said Habib remains a "security interest" but will not be shackled as the government transports him half way around the world because he will not be charged with anything on his return.

That decision has raised concerns Habib could conceivably demand to be let off the aircraft at refueling stops and Australian officials might be powerless to stop him, according to Ruddock.

"The timing of the detainee's return to Australia remains under discussion between our two governments," a US state department spokeswoman Darla Jordan said, without giving details. *Reuters*

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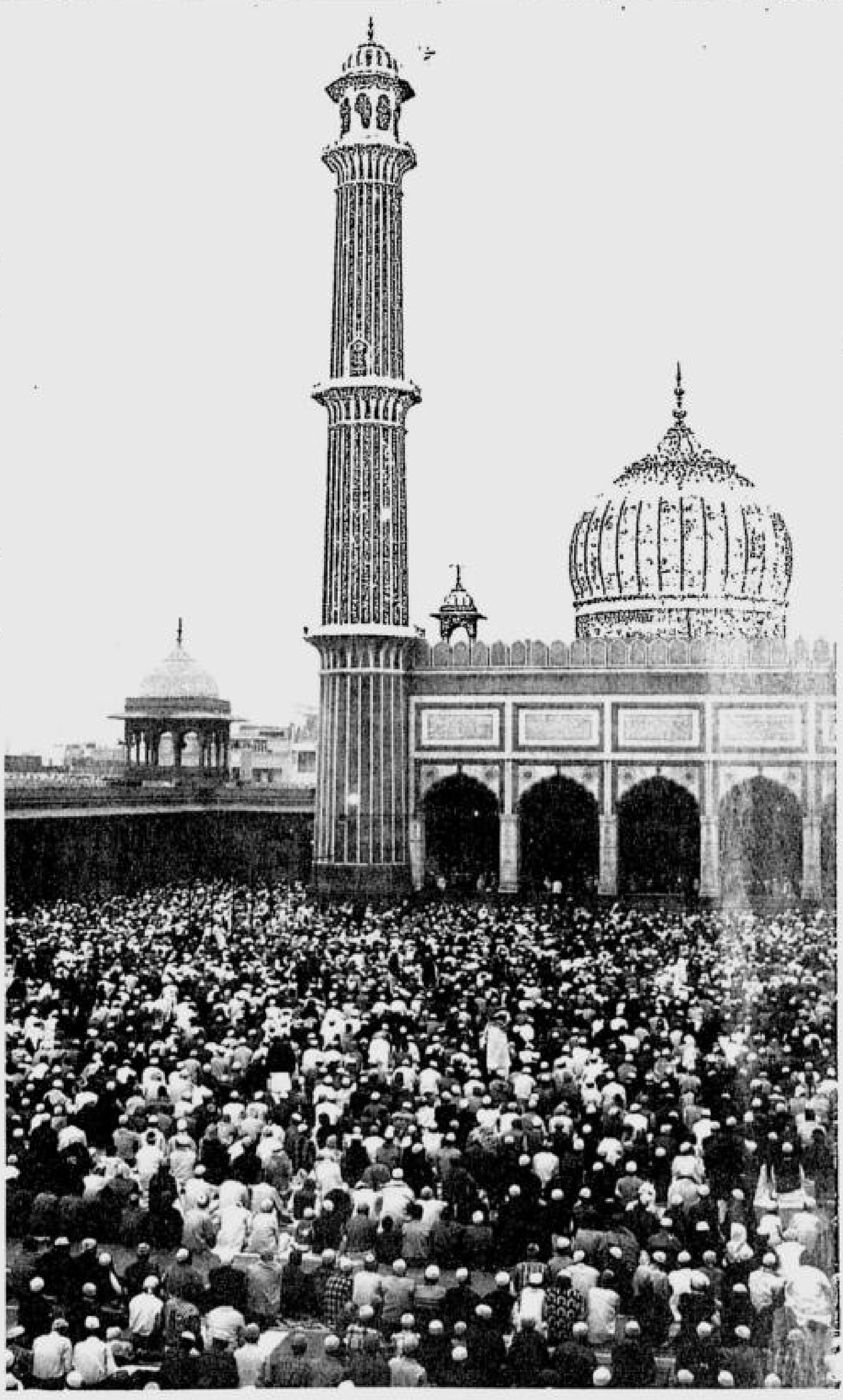


EID CELEBRATION

Muslims pray at Jama Masjid, India's biggest mosque, to celebrate Eid-Al-Azha in New Delhi Jan. 21. Muslims across the world are celebrating Eid al-Azha which is the festival of sacrifice and feast. AFP

Dispute over Zhao's legacy holds up funeral

BEIJING—Disagreement between the family of deposed leader Zhao Ziyang and the Chinese government over its official assessment on his legacy is holding up funeral arrangements, a family friend said Friday.

Zhao, who died in a Beijing hospital on Monday aged 85, was ousted for opposing the military crackdown on the 1989 Tiananmen Square pro-democracy protests in which hundreds, perhaps thousands, were killed.

The authorities are insisting on handling his funeral but have not told the family its formal assessment of him nor the scale of the planned ceremony, the source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said.

"They want the family to agree to let them to handle it, but won't tell them the content (of the assessment)," the source said.

"They won't let the family handle it privately either."

The State Council, China's cabinet, announced Thursday it would hold "a ceremony to bid farewell to the remains"—effectively a funeral—but gave no indication whether top officials would attend.

An official assessment of the life of a deceased communist party cadre is normally agreed with the family before the funeral and is important for the person's reputation after their death.

A negative assessment could jeopardize their offsprings' careers within the party or the government, although most of Zhao's five children are in private business.

The Chinese Communist Party has meanwhile told party members they must be consistent with the party's position over Zhao's legacy, another source said.

"Zhao Ziyang has made contributions towards the party and the country. He made a mistake during the June 4th (Tiananmen) incident and his treatment by the party central committee was correct," the source quoted a party department as saying. *AFP*

Britain cracks down on excessive drinking

LONDON—Britain launched Friday a major crackdown on the nation's increasing fondness for excessive drinking, warning bars that they might have to cover the costs of policing their unruly customers.

The series of government proposals also include a plan to ban people from their regular drinking haunts if they are convicted three times of alcohol-related crimes.

Additionally, bars found selling drinks to under-18s could be issued with immediate closure notices, the government said in a statement.

"Our current licensing laws are creaking under the strain. That's why we're reforming them—to make our towns and cities safe for all, not a free-for-all," said culture minister Tessa Jowell, whose

The crackdown follows weeks of intense criticism of government plans to allow pubs and bars to open throughout the night, as against current laws which compel the vast majority to shut at 11 p.m.

Ministers argue that the relatively early closure—first introduced in World War I to curb drinking by munitions factory workers—encourages a social culture in which Britons rush their drinks to beat the deadline.

They also claim that staggered closing times will prevent the violence which traditionally breaks out in many towns and cities just after 11 p.m., when hordes of drunk youngsters pour into the streets at the same time. *AFP*

Apartment life in New York ruled by mighty co-ops

By Ellen Wulfhorst

NEW YORK—Imagine buying a new home where your neighbors can decide how it's decorated, what you cook for dinner, how big your dog is and what kind of sex you have. And they can toss you out if they don't like it.

You've got a problem with that? Millions of New Yorkers live with it every day.

Residential life in New York is ruled by the almighty co-operative, whereby apartment owners form a board to run their buildings and decide who may live there and who may not.

The city is filled with tales of co-op nightmares. A first-time buyer bidding on a tiny studio might well be rejected over an overlooked bill paid late years ago.

At the other end of the scale, media mogul Rupert Murdoch is paying a record $44 million cash for a multifloor spread in a Fifth Avenue building where all buyers must pass muster before a very choosy co-op board.

Murdoch was not even the highest bidder. Someone else wanted to offer $1 million more but only had $100 million in assets, said real estate agent Barbara Corcoran.

"We knew he wouldn't get through the board," she said.

By law, a co-op board is free to reject anyone, so long as it does not discriminate on such factors as race or religion.

"Of course, they go too far," said Corcoran. "And the more money there is, the more difficult it is."

Co-op residents buy shares in a company that owns the apartments and then pay fees for repairs, taxes and such. Co-ops make up around 80 percent of privately owned housing in Manhattan.

"They're almost a unique institution to New York," said real estate attorney Joel Abramson, who said co-ops help the urban middle class to own rather than rent their homes.

In an oft-told tale, former US President Richard Nixon was rejected by a co-op after his resignation from the White House.

Other famous co-op board rejections have been handed to entertainer Madonna, heiress Gloria Vanderbilt, singers Carly Simon and Mariah Carey and designer Calvin Klein.

Actors Antonio Banderas and Melanie Griffith were just turned down for a duplex in the Dakota building, which has been home to such celebrities as Lauren Bacall, Leonard Bernstein, Rudolph Nureyev and Mia Farrow. Beatle John Lennon was slain at the building's gates; his widow Yoko Ono still lives there.

The Dakota board turned down Griffith and Banderas without meeting them, according to a letter written in dismay by the apartment's would-be sellers.

"We were shocked by the board's narrowness of vision," the owners wrote, calling the decision "arbitrary" and "arrogant."

Not just celebrities get such tough treatment. Along with insisting on background checks and financial reviews, some co-ops have been known to interview prospective buyers' dogs.

Once buyers move in, co-op rules can determine the hours one may do the laundry and what noises and smells can waft out of the doors. Loud sex is frowned upon, as is cigarette smoke.

One couple bought side-by-side studios with the co-op's assurance they could knock down walls and create one apartment.

Once they moved in, however, they learned that should they move out, they must put the two units back as they were.

Pets are a persistent issue, with co-ops determining what they are, how many there are and how big they are.

"There's a terrible problem in the city with people hoarding pets," said Mary Ann Rothman, executive director of the Council of New York Cooperatives & Condominiums. "If one kitty cat is nice, then 17 are 17 times as nice."

One Manhattan co-op discovered a resident was raising wolves in his apartment, said real estate attorney Aaron Shmulewitz.

"They weren't little. They were big," he said. *Reuters*

Car bomb attack on Iraq Shiite mosque kills 14

BAGHDAD—A car bomb exploded outside a Shiite mosque in Baghdad Friday, killing at least 14 people and wounding 40, police and hospital officials said, in the latest violence in the lead-up to this month's elections.

The explosives-laden car blew up outside the al-Taf mosque in the capital's southwest, where Shiites were celebrating one of Islam's most important holidays, Eid al-Adha, or Feast of Sacrifice. The feast coincides with the yearly pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

Attacks on Shiites have increased in the run-up to Iraq's Jan. 30 parliamentary and provincial elections. Friday's blast was the second outside a Shiite mosque in the capital this week and it came a day after a chief terror leader in Iraq berated Shiites in an Internet audio recording that appeared aimed at sowing division in the country.

Iraq's Shiites—a community that was oppressed for decades—strongly supports the vote, believing it will propel them to a position of influence equal to their standing as the country's majority group. They make up about 60 percent of the Iraq's 26 million people.

But militants among the Sunni Arab minority—which lost privilege when their patron Saddam Hussein was toppled—have vowed to stop the vote.

Some Sunni clerics and politicians have called for a boycott of the vote, saying violence in Sunni areas will keep people from the polls and skew the outcome of the balloting against them.

An official at Baghdad's al-Yarmouk Hospital said the blast at the mosque killed at least 14 people and wounded 40 others.

The car exploded as worshippers were leaving prayers in the building, a witness said. The blast left several cars in flames and showered the area with charred debris.

At al-Yarmouk Hospital, dozens of weeping men and women franticly searched for news about loved ones feared caught up in the bombing.

A distraught man sat beside his dead 14-year-old son, covered with a sheet, and cried out, "I had breakfast with him this morning. I told him, 'Let's go to your grandfather,' but he insisted on going for prayers first."

A woman dressed in a black cloak, or abaya, fainted as she identified the body of her son in the hospital's morgue. She was carried away by relatives.

In a new Internet audio recording purportedly from Iraq's most feared terror leader, Jordanian-born Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the speaker denounced Iraqi Shiites for fighting alongside US troops.

Al-Zarqawi, the leader of Iraq's al-Qaida affiliate, ridiculed Iraq's most prominent Shiite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, and berated Shiites for fighting alongside American troops against their Sunni countrymen in Fallujah in November.

"They broke into the safe houses of God," the speaker said of Shiites. "They defiled them and they hung the photos of their Satan, al-Sistani, on the walls and they spitefully wrote: 'Today, your land; tomorrow it will be your honor.'"

In the 90-minute message posted on the Web Thursday, al-Zarqawi called on his followers to show patience and prepare for a long struggle against the Americans, promising that "ferocious wars… take their time" but victory was assured. *AP*

BUNKER precinct—US Marines guide a concrete barrier into position at the front entrance to a school which will be used as a polling station, in preparation for the up coming elections in Najaf, Iraq on Jan. 20. AP

Fate of Chinese hostages in Iraq in the balance as deadline passes

BEIJING—Iraq could mobilize "special troops" to free eight kidnapped Chinese nationals, state media said here Friday after a deadline set by the men's militant captors, who threatened to execute them, had passed.

Iraq's ambassador in China Mohammad Ifmeiio was quoted by the Beijing Youth Daily as saying the interim government was exploring all avenues to win the men's release, "even mobilizing special troops."

He could not be reached Friday.

Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said the government was working day and night to free the hostages, whom the militants had threatened to execute unless Beijing "clarified" its position on Iraq by Thursday.

"Every hour, we are in contact with our embassy in Baghdad," Li said.

The foreign ministry Friday said it had no new information but posted a statement on its website in which Li called on China's ambassador in Iraq Yang Honglin to ensure the men, aged 18 to 40, were saved.

"Once again he expressed our nation's leaders' concern about the kidnapped Chinese citizens' safety and demanded the ambassador and the embassy make every effort with the help of the Iraqi people to help free them as soon as possible," it said.

The embassy in Baghdad declined to comment Friday but told Xinhua news agency it was maintaining contacts with Iraqi governmental and non-governmental parties.

Chinese diplomats have been talking with the Committee of Muslim Scholars, which helped win the release of seven Chinese taken hostage last year.

The influential body of Sunni Muslim clerics was quoted by Chinese media Thursday as saying it was optimistic the men would be released.

On Tuesday kidnappers reportedly from the Movement of the Islamic Resistance Nuamaan Brigade released footage to Al-Jazeera television of the eight laborers holding Chinese passports.

It claimed they were helping the US military build facilities in Iraq and demanded Beijing "clarify" its position on Iraq within 48 hours or the hostages would be executed.

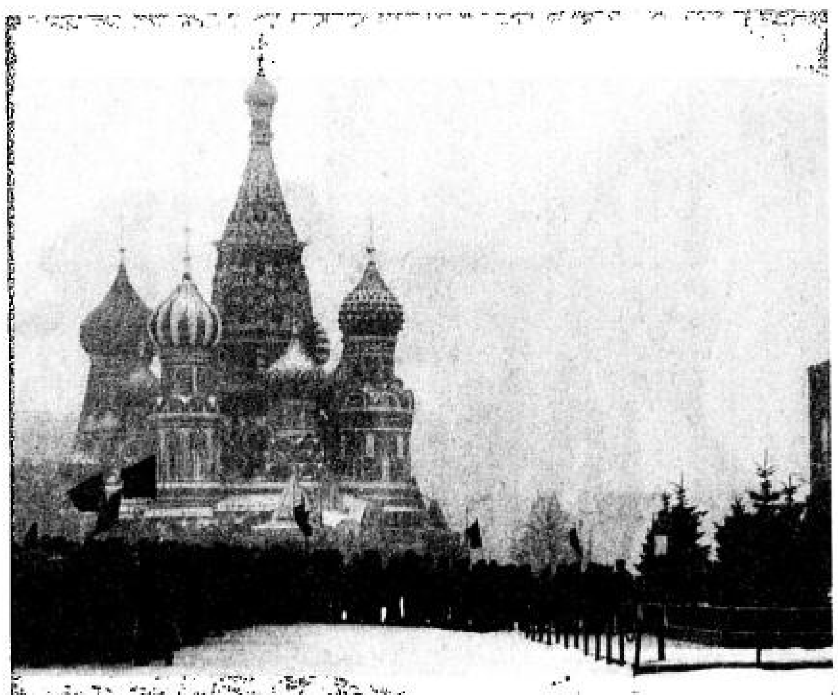
The government and employers of the plant the eight men were helping build have both denied there was any link to the United States.

Beijing opposed the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 but, like other nations, its companies have chased lucrative reconstruction contracts in the war-ravaged country.

Vice President Zeng Qinghong was quoted as saying Friday that rebuilding Iraq "not only relates to the war-torn nation's future but also influences regional stability."

"China is willing to offer assistance in the effort," Xinhua cited him as saying.

"China hopes the upcoming Iraqi election will help maintain independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq," he said. *AFP*



RUSSIAN Communists queue outside the mausoleum of the Soviet state founder Vladimir Lenin to lay flowers in Moscow's Red Square, Jan. 21. Russian Communists on Friday will mark the 81st anniversary of Lenin's death. REUTERS

Beslan protesters press demand for int'l probe of hostage tragedy

MOSCOW—Hundreds of relatives of those killed in bloody school hostage-taking in the southern Russian city of Beslan last autumn refused Friday to lift a blockade of a major road and continued to demand an international inquiry into the tragedy, news agencies reported.

"We no longer have faith in anybody and we will continue to press our demands until the end," Interfax news agency quoted one of the protesters as saying after they rebuffed a request to end their protest by a top official in the republic of North Ossetia.

Interfax said there were around 300 people taking part in the blockade of the road linking the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don to Baku, the capital of neighboring Azerbaijan, and said most of them were relatives of people who died in the chaotic end to the hostage crisis.

Nearly 350 people, around half of them young school children, were killed as a result of a horrifying shootout Sept. 3 between Russian security forces and some 30 pro-Chechen gunmen who held some 1,200 children and adults hostage inside a primary school in Beslan for three days.

Radical Chechen warlord Shamil Basayev claimed responsibility for the act.

Interfax said the protesters, unhappy with scant results communicated to them so far from two official Russian government investigations of the tragedy, had set up a large tent in the middle of the strategic route.

In addition to a third-party probe of the violence, they were demanding the resignation of the top regional leader, North Ossetian President Alexander Dzasokhov, and punishment of local and federal officials they believe bear some responsibility for the tragedy.

Russian Deputy Prosecutor General Vladimir Kolesnikov met relatives of Beslan victims on Thursday and promised they would be given access to results obtained so far of the executive branch's probe of the tragedy, ITAR-TASS news agency said.

"You will see for yourself that the investigation has been conducted honestly," the agency quoted Kolesnikov as saying.

Last month, the head of a separate Russian parliamentary investigation into the hostage-taking promised to produce a report as sweeping as that of the US inquiry into the Sept. 11 terror attacks in the United States. *AFP*

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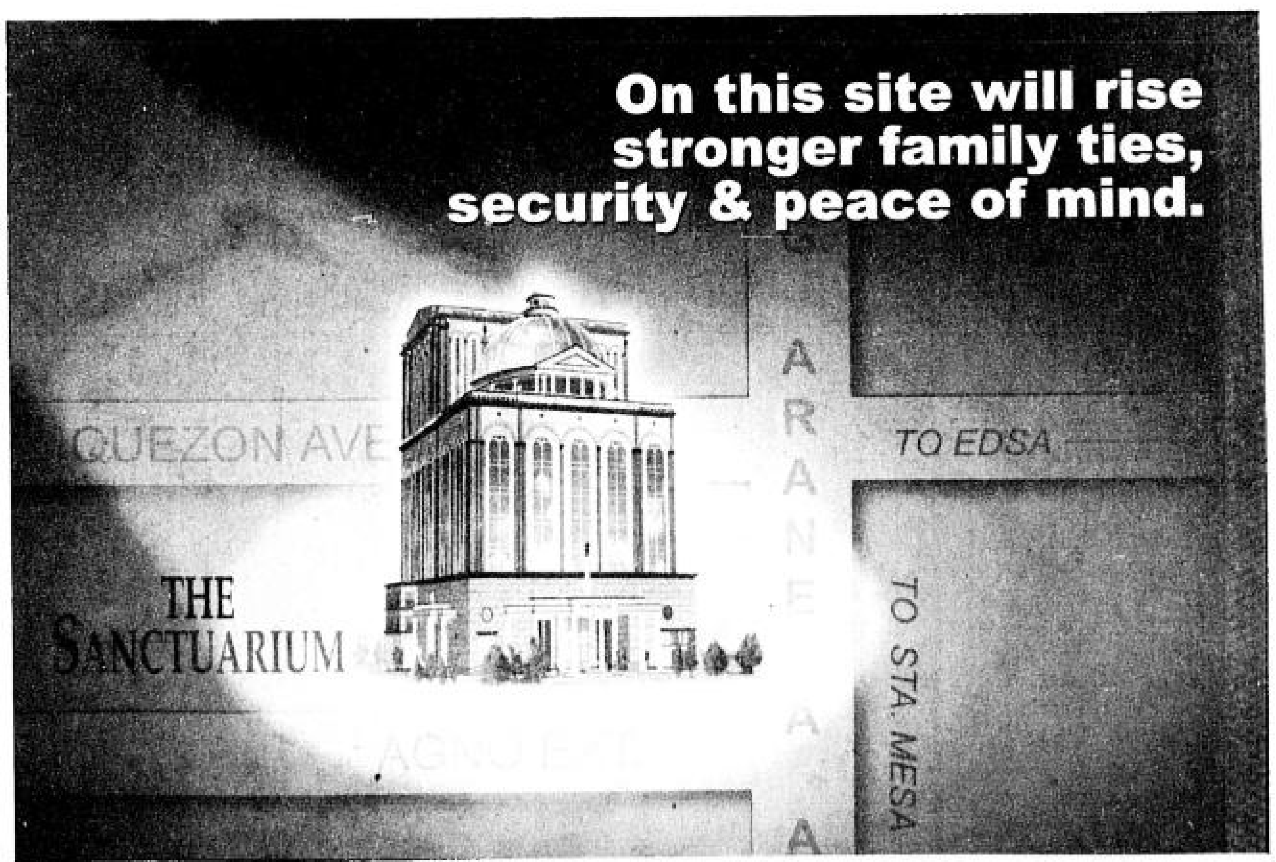

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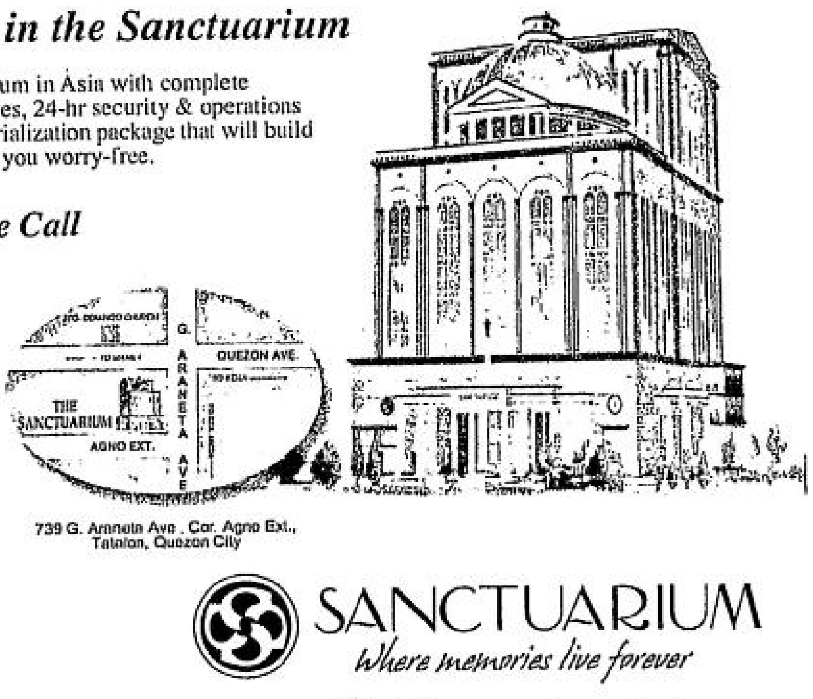

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UN: Tsunami aid effort moving to 'Phase Two'

BANGKOK—The international aid effort for countries affected by the Indian Ocean tsunami is moving into "Phase Two," focusing more on reconstruction than pure emergency relief, a top United Nations official said on Friday.

"Three weeks down the line, I think now we are quite impressed with how rapidly the recovery efforts of people are starting to take place," Margareta Wahlstrom, the UN's special tsunami envoy, told a news conference in the Thai capital.

"We are now reaching very quickly the second phase of our relief operation, which will focus on how to support people to regain their livelihoods—how to get them back to work, how to make sure the children go back to school, how to prevent the outbreak of diseases," she said.

The shift in focus would lead to a gradual reduction in the military aid effort, especially army helicopters which have been the only way of reaching many isolated tsunami-hit communities, especially in the Indonesian province of Aceh.

Instead, Wahlstrom said aid agencies would be relying more on repaired roads or sea routes to deliver longer-term aid to help hundreds of thousands of survivors get back on their feet.

A simmering 30-year separatist rebellion in Aceh has caused the Indonesian government to fret about the safety of foreign aid workers in the region, although Wahlstrom said the UN had no specific worries.

"For the time being we have no security concerns," Wahlstrom said, after three weeks spent assessing the damage in tsunami-hit regions. "Our situation has not changed in Aceh in terms of how we work and how we organize ourselves."

Rebel leaders have repeatedly said they welcome international relief efforts spearheaded by the United Nations and would not attack aid workers or convoys.

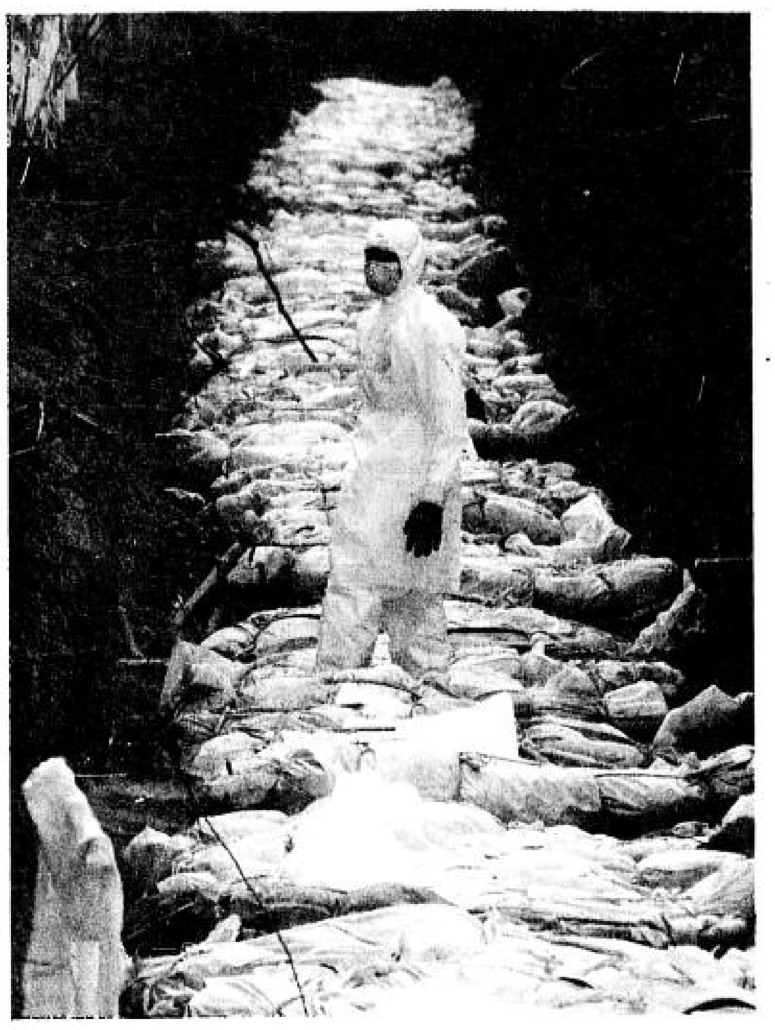
The death toll from the killer waves, which thumped into the shores of the Indian Ocean on Dec. 26, stands at over 225,000, a figure which is likely to creep up, Wahlstrom said, although a clear picture of the extent of physical damage had emerged.

"I think in Sri Lanka and the Maldives there is a good understanding of the impact," she said.

"And in (Indonesia's) Sumatra it's very quickly getting to the point where there is an understanding of the economic cost, of the social cost, and what needs to be done infrastructurally."

Health officials are still worried about the threat of outbreaks of diseases such as cholera in towns where buildings and infrastructure such as sewage systems have been washed away.

The World Health Organization said it was also keeping a close eye out for increases in infection rates of malaria or dengue fever among communities now living without normal protection from mosquitoes. *Reuters*



WORKERS collect bodies of those killed in the recent tsunami in a mass grave, Jan. 7, near Takuapa, Thailand. Jan. 23 marks the one month anniversary of the killer wave that has left more than 5,000 in Thailand dead and some 3,000 still missing. AP

Scientists say tsunamis may hit Caribbean

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—Scientists predict killer tsunamis could strike the Caribbean, which lacks an adequate warning system even though its seabed is gouged by some of the world's deepest trenches where tidal waves are generated.

They last struck the region in 1946, but that was before island populations grew massively, major construction dotted shorelines and the region developed into a prized tourist destination which attracted 17 million visitors last year.

"The Caribbean is a very dangerous place for tsunamis," said Uri ten Brink, a US Geological Survey geologist in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, and co-author of an article on the threat in the Journal of Geophysical Research.

The article was published two days before the Asia tsunami hit Dec. 26 and killed more than 162,000 people. It was triggered by a quake along the long north-south fault where the edge of the Indian plate dives below the Burma plate, known as the Sunda Trench, which is about 25,000 feet deep.

The Puerto Rico trench—one of the deepest in the world at 8,207 meters—is a 900-km-long underwater canyon and fault line that runs parallel to the US island territory for which it is named and east of the Lesser Antilles islands.

Tensions in the Puerto Rico, Hispaniola and Cayman Trenches which ring the Caribbean, force tectonic plates to sink under one another as they collide, producing earthquakes, underwater landslides or tsunamis. The deeper the water, the quicker waves form.

The last fatal tsunami here occurred in 1946 when an 8.1-magnitude earthquake in the Hispaniola Trench triggered a tidal wave that killed an estimated 1,700 people in the Dominican Republic and Haiti, ten Brink said in a telephone interview.

Major earthquakes erupt about every 50 years in the Caribbean, a region where even minor natural disasters can kill thousands because of environmental degradation, shoddy construction and the large numbers of people living in coastal areas or on low-lying islands. *AP*

Fish stricken off menus in wake of fears of corpse-feasting

JAKARTA—Top hotels in several Asian capitals have stopped ordering sea bass and sole from waters off their tsunami-ravaged coastlines to ease diners' concerns about fish feasting on corpses.

Some have turned to suppliers in Australia, while others are buying fish from Indonesian islands off the Pacific Ocean that were untouched by disaster—dealing another blow to fishermen whose livelihoods were shattered by the giant waves.

Health officials say fears of fish are unwarranted and insist there is no evidence of a risk posed by eating fish from the Indian Ocean, where at least 157,000 people died in Asia and Africa. But, in a region that suffered through bird flu and other recent food scares, several top eateries and their suppliers are unwilling to take chances.

Markus Schneider, a manager at Jakarta's Mandarin Oriental, said the hotel's first reaction to the Dec. 26 disaster was to collect donations for victims. Then, the focus turned to seafood dishes at the hotel's three restaurants.

"We went straight to our suppliers to make sure their supplies didn't come from Sumatra," he said. Many did, including the shrimp for an Italian risotto, the antipasti's calamari and the sea bass filets served over sauteed greens. Tens of thousands died on Sumatra island after the magnitude 9 temblor and tsunami that followed.

Some of the hotel's fish was already imported, but all orders that had come from Indonesia were switched to Australia. That increases costs by about 15 percent, a figure that doesn't worry hotels that cater to business travelers and tourists.

"We didn't want people to be concerned. There's nothing worse than a sick customer," said Schneider. The hotel's branch in Thailand's capital, Bangkok, has taken similar precautions, he said.

International health agencies, including the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization, say the fears are unfounded. *AP*

Hollywood stars give to Thai victims

BANGKOK — Oscar-winning actors Michael Douglas and Jeremy Irons on Friday personally delivered a donation from Hollywood for Thailand's tsunami victims to Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

Irons and Douglas, whom the United Nations has named a messenger of peace, handed Thaksin the check for about one million baht (about $26,000), collected from a Hollywood fundraiser.

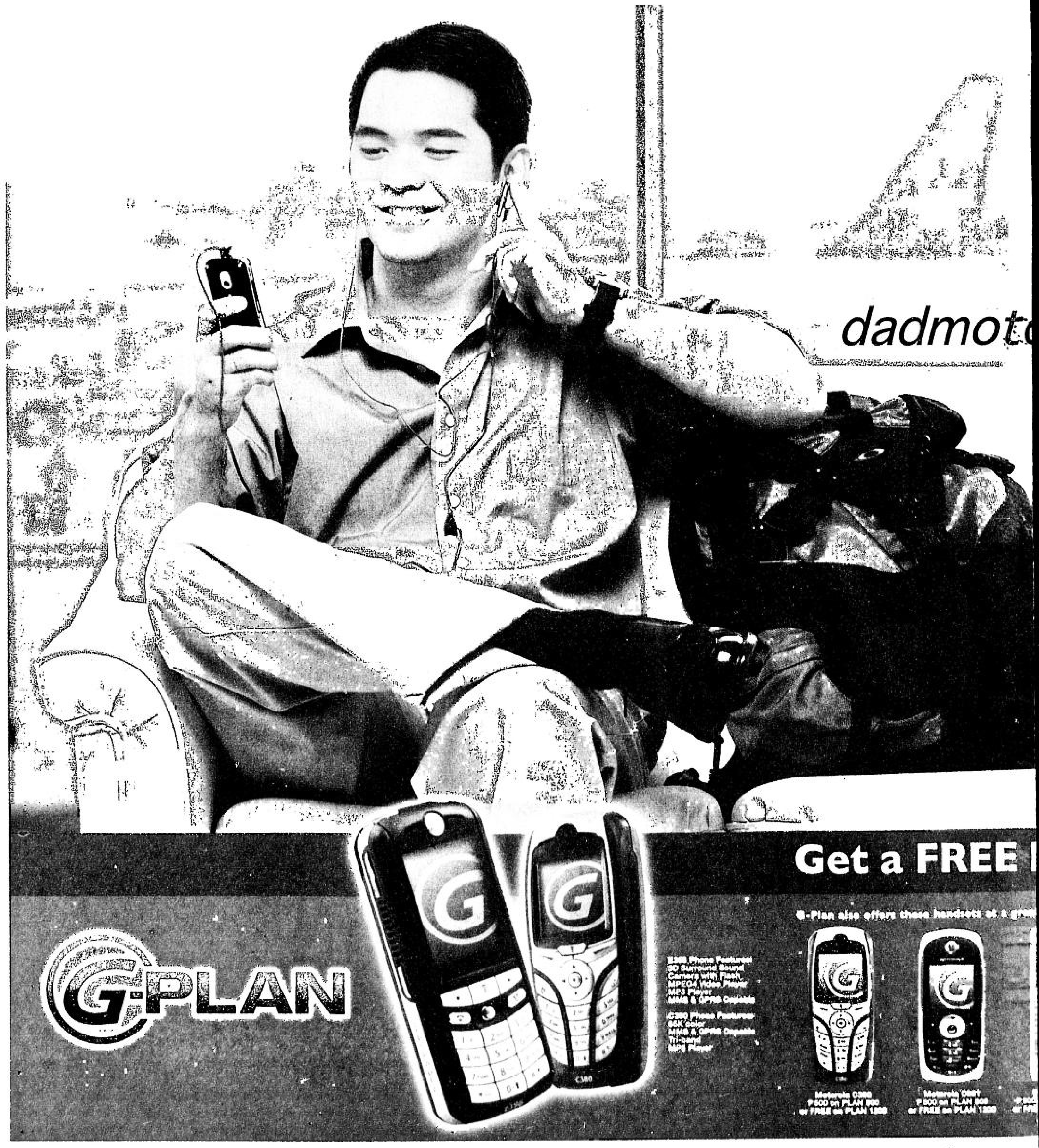
Both men are visiting Thailand for the Bangkok International Film Festival, where British star Irons' film "Being Julia" is screening.

Douglas, who starred in movies such as "Basic Instinct" and "Traffic," expressed sympathy for the Thai victims and said he would return to Thailand with his wife, Oscar-winning Welsh beauty Catherine Zeta-Jones.

"I want to express my gratitude to Hollywood's stars for their contribution and for their support of the Bangkok International Film Festival. I hope that they will come to use Thailand as location" in their films, Thaksin told reporters.

Thaksin said Hollywood celebrities have donated a total of some ten million baht (about $263,000) to a government-sponsored tsunami relief fund.

The Dec. 26 tsunami killed more than 5,300 people in Thailand and left some 3,100 missing. About half the victims were believed to be foreign holidaymakers. *AFP*



Megacities seen facing huge risks from disasters

KOBE, Japan—The devastation likely in the world's teeming megacities should natural disaster strike could be far worse even than the huge losses of last month's Asian tsunami in which more than 225,000 died, experts at a United Nations disaster prevention conference said.

Megacities are vulnerable to various dangers including earthquakes, tropical storms and floods, and time to prepare may be running out.

"We are talking about extreme events," Srikantha Herath, an expert in urban risk management at the UN University in Tokyo, said in Kobe, where the conference is being held.

"It's a question of whether we can prepare in time.

Sometimes urbanization goes so fast you can't intervene."

Others were even more blunt.

"Megacities are becoming the highest vulnerability of all," said Salvano Briceno, head of the UN's disaster reduction body.

Megacities are defined as those with a population of 10 million or more and a dense concentration of people, often in slums formed when people stream in from poor rural areas in search of work.

"People are a different source of vulnerability," said Janos Bogardi, at the Institute for Environment and Human Security in Bonn. "They settle in slums in some of the most risk-prone areas."

According to UN data, the five largest megacities are the greater Tokyo area with 35.3 million people, Mexico City with 19 million, New York-Newark 18.5 million, Bombay 18.3 million and Sao Paulo 18.3 million.

Frequently growth occurs so rapidly that authorities are overwhelmed. Istanbul, which is highly vulnerable to earthquakes, grew from 1 million people in the 1950s to about 10 million today, a 10-fold increase in half a century.

Waves of migrants crowd into existing houses, often substandard, or put up cheap shelters wherever they can, frequently on land left empty because it is dangerous.

In Quito, the capital of Ecuador, many flimsy houses perch on the side of hills where they are vulnerable to landslides caused by earthquakes or volcanic eruptions.

For Bombay the risk is tropical storms, for San Paulo it is floods and for Mexico it is earthquakes.

While megacities in developing nations may suffer most when disaster strikes, some of the world's most modern urban areas are also at risk, both from dramatic events such as earthquakes and far more frequent ones like floods.

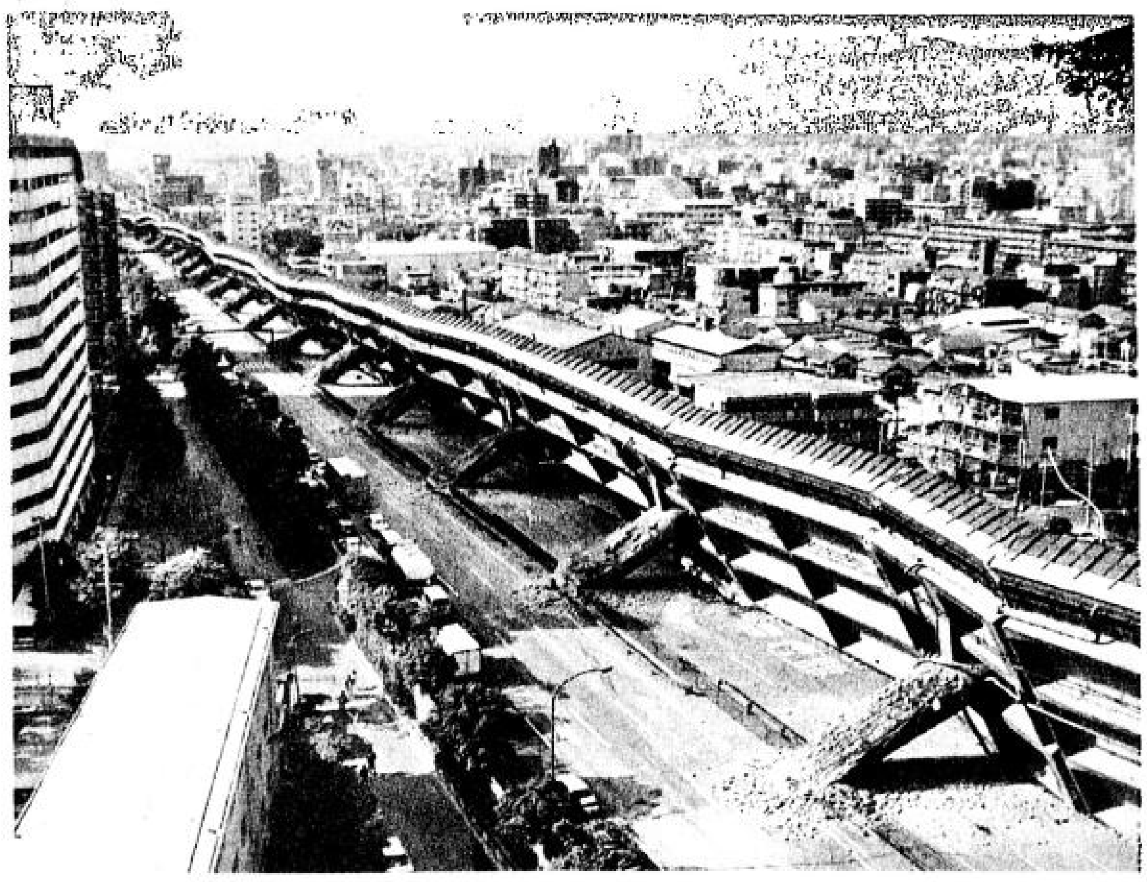
"Some of these big disasters are not occurring in exotic, faraway places but also in Europe," said Bogardi. "We cheat ourselves if we believe we are in safety."

New York is vulnerable to severe weather and experts say it could be hit by an earthquake. The whole east coast of North America could one day be devastated by a tsunami caused by an undersea landslip off the Canary Islands, some scientists say.

Japan is vulnerable to cyclones but the big danger is earthquakes. A quake in Kobe a decade ago killed 6,433 people and caused economic losses of nearly $100 billion.

The greater Tokyo area is a particular concern because of its high population, history of earthquakes and the impact on the world economy if a major quake devastated the capital of the world's number two economy.

Experts say a major quake in the city, which was flattened in 1923 by a quake and subsequent fires, is long overdue. *Reuters*



AERIAL view of Nishinomiya area near Kobe taken Jan. 17, 1995 shows a collapsed elevated highway after a massive quake hit the area. Megacities are vulnerable to disasters which could cause a greater toll than the recent tsunami tragedy, experts say.

AFP

Stressed Masako may return to duty outside Tokyo

TOKYO—Japan's Crown Princess Masako, who has long shunned the public eye due to stress, may make an official trip outside Tokyo for the first time in 15 months, reports said Friday.

The princess may join her husband Crown Prince Naruhito, 44, to attend a ceremony at the Special Olympics World Winter Games next month in Nagano, some 160 km northwest of Tokyo, the Jiji Press news agency said.

If she attended the ceremony, it would mark her first official duty outside Tokyo in 15 months, Jiji, TV Asahi and public broadcaster NHK said.

A spokesperson for the Imperial Household Agency declined to confirm the reports.

Royal watchers believe the pressure to produce a male heir has put stress on Masako, 41, as the current imperial law only allows a man to ascend the throne of the world's oldest royal line.

Masako, a Harvard graduate who speaks four languages, gave up a promising diplomatic career to marry Naruhito in 1993. They have one daughter, 3-year-old Crown Princess Aiko.

On Jan. 2, a smiling Masako returned to official duties for the first time in 13 months by waving to thousands of well-wishers on the Imperial Palace balcony.

But, she only allowed herself to take part in the first of the day's seven appearances. Each appearance, a custom for the royal family, lasts about five minutes.

On her 41st birthday on December 9, Masako promised she would try to get back to her official duties soon. *AFP*

Koizumi vows better relations with China

TOKYO—Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi promised Friday to mend fences with China while renewing his controversial pledge to privatize Japan's mammoth post office.

Political rows with China should not hurt close bilateral trade, Koizumi said as he kicked off a 150-day parliamentary session with a major policy speech.

"Even if we (Japan and China) have different opinions, I will enhance cooperation in wide-ranging fields from a broader viewpoint," he said without voicing any specific proposals.

Beijing has been angered by his repeated pilgrimages to Tokyo's Yasukuni shrine which honors Japanese war dead, including wartime leaders during Japan's occupation of China.

Ties between the two Asian powers sank to a new low when a Chinese submarine intruded into Japanese waters in November and Tokyo revised its defense guidelines to list Beijing as a potential threat.

Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura told parliament that, "China represents a great and valuable opportunity for Japan in the future."

Meanwhile, Koizumi promised to guide the world's second-largest economy on to a steady economic recovery track, repeating the phrase "no reforms, no growth" several times during his speech.

He vowed to split Japan's vast postal service into four private entities despite the risk of dividing his ruling party which is concerned the move could offend Japan Post's 270,000 workers and their families.

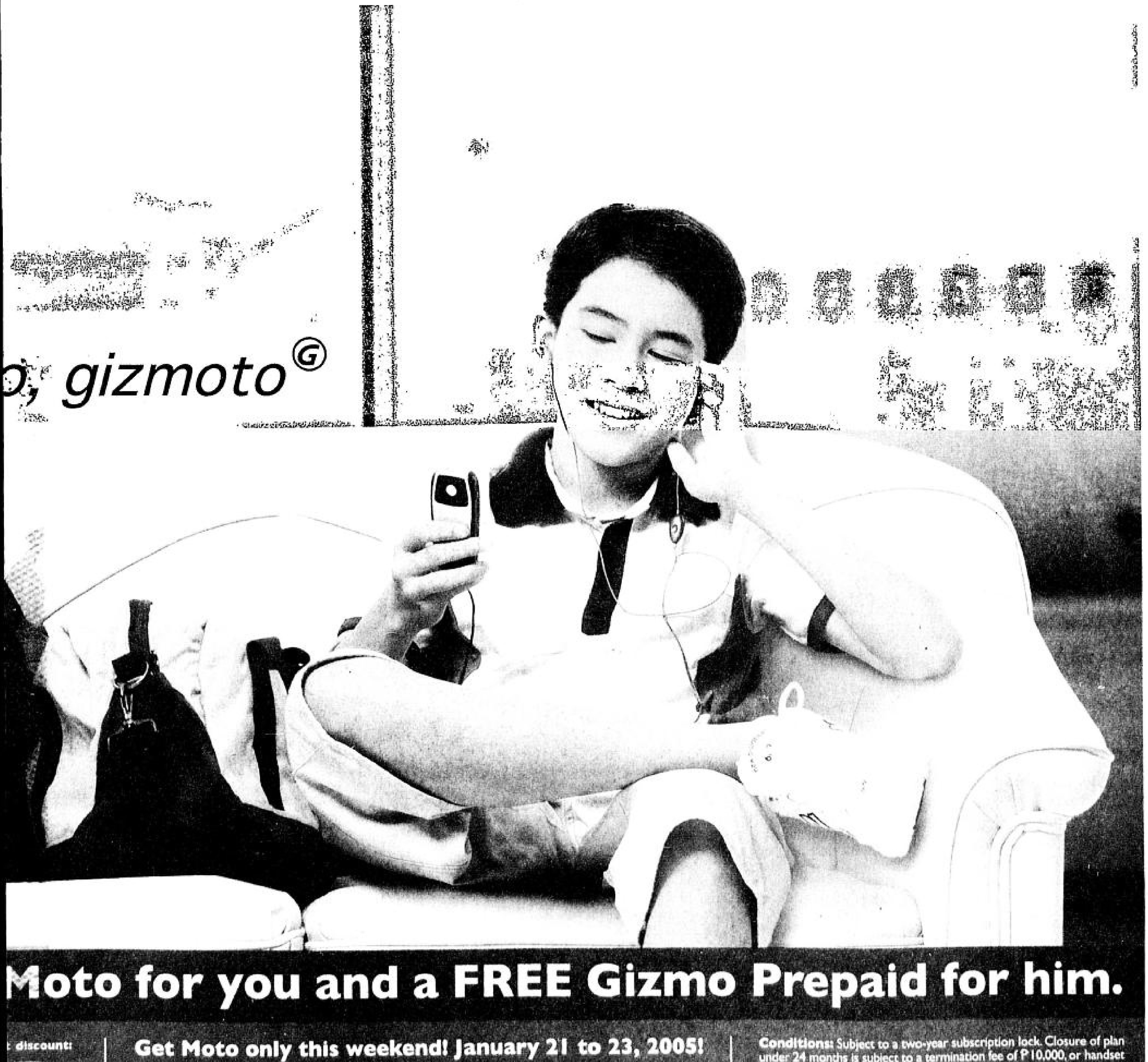
"The remaining big reform... is postal privatization," Koizumi told parliament.

The government would begin enacting bills in April 2007 to divide the postal giant regardless of the million votes its workers were reputed to be capable of mobilizing, he said.

The law change would allow for private carriers and financial institutions to compete in the huge markets presently dominated by Japan Post.

The post office manages some 355 trillion yen ($3.5 trillion) in savings and insurance funds, making it the world's largest financial institution in terms of assets.

Koizumi, who came to power in April 2001, did not refer to the swearing in for a second term as US president of his close ally George W. Bush, simply stating that Tokyo would enhance its ties with Washington with close dialogue. *AFP*



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OPINION

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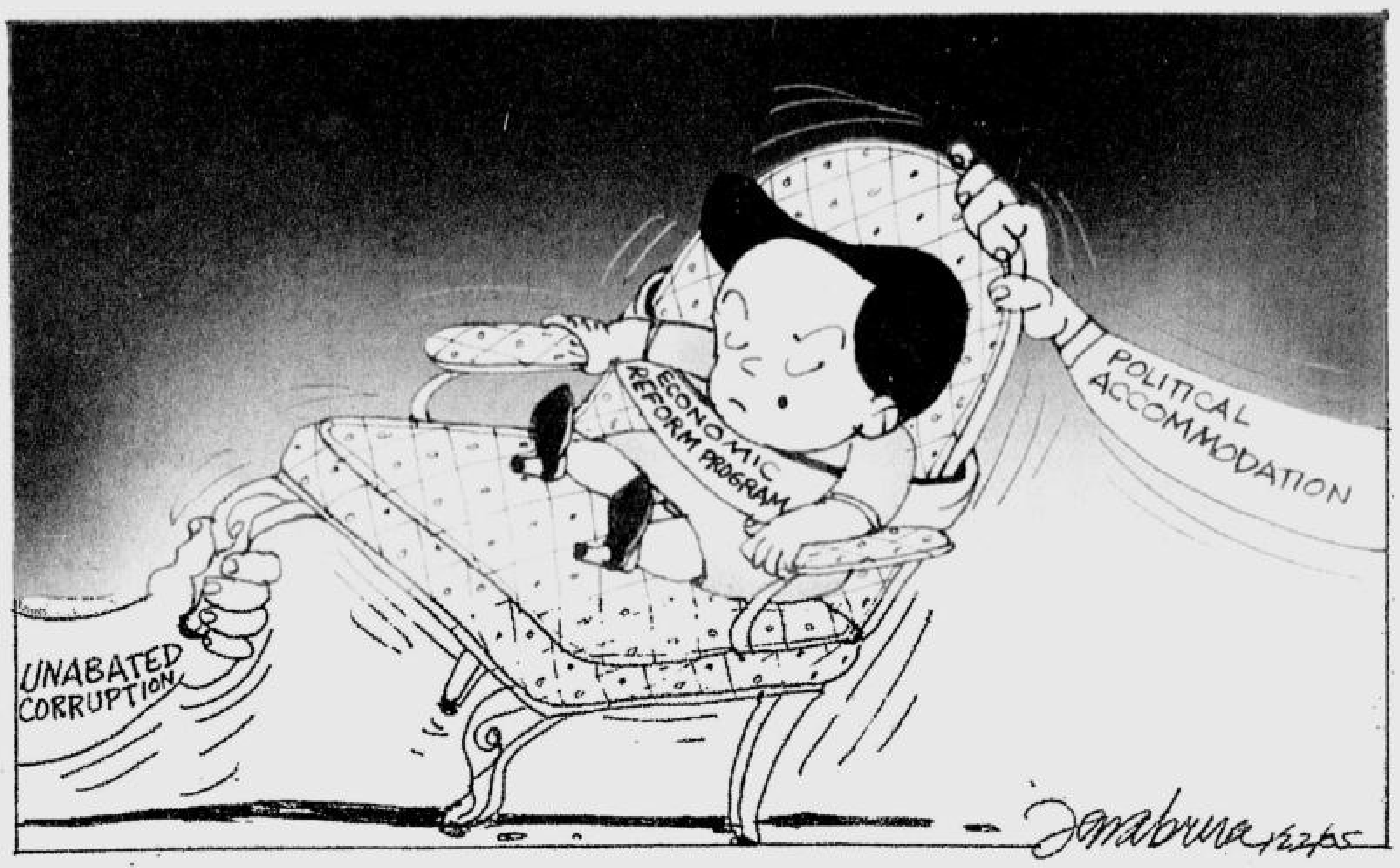


Swagger

EDITORIAL

THE 55TH presidential inaugural in American history held Thursday night (Manila time) formally set the 43rd president of the United States on his second and last term. George W. Bush successfully sought reelection as a wartime president. But unlike his wartime predecessors, such as Franklin D. Roosevelt, there was nothing austere about the inaugural or the preparations for it.

The inauguration was actually the highlight of a week-long affair that began with a military gala and a youth concert on Jan. 18, musical acts, entertainment and a fireworks display on the 19th, the inauguration itself at noon on the 20th, followed by a parade and nine inaugural balls that evening. Of the inaugural balls, one was a new addition: the Commander-in-Chief Ball. This event was free of charge to 2,000 members of the armed services and their families, featuring those who recently returned from Iraq and Afghanistan, or those who would be deployed there soon.

The inaugural festivities cost a whopping $40 million, amid criticisms that the money would have been better spent for tsunami victims' relief, or simply set the amount aside since the United States is at war. The primacy of big business in the reinaugurated administration's scheme of things was illustrated by CEOs being "asked" to donate tens of thousands of dollars each for seats at the various inaugural balls, and for other "contributions," viewed as nothing more or less than payback.

Preparations for the inaugural parade were marred by a court case being filed by protesters, who alleged that their democratic rights were trampled by security measures and their being shunted aside as a result: most of the parade route from the US Capitol to the White House was occupied by bleachers reserved for those who had donated funds for the inaugural. A group calling itself Act Now to Stop War and End Racism (Answer) protested the reserved bleachers. But a judge threw out the case saying, "It's clear, as I think it always has been, that the official inaugural parade and the bleachers connected with it get the bulk of the space." Protesters retained the right to distribute literature and carry signs, but the US Secret Service forbade signs to be attached to sticks or poles that could be used as weapons.

Stripped of the hoopla and controversy, the reality is that the second term of George W. Bush is of tremendous significance for America and the world. On the eve of the second Bush inaugural, veteran American journalist Seymour Hersh published a piece examining the American president's significantly increased power over intelligence and covert operations. What sparked headlines around the globe was an unnamed source telling Hersh that US military action against Iran is already under way. According to the source, with the help of Pakistan, the Bush administration has sent reconnaissance teams into Iran for some months now. Furthermore, Bush had authorized secret commando groups to target terrorists in at least 10 nations, as well as approved the recruitment of local "action teams."

Hersh points out that since these missions are classified as military—rather than intelligence—operations, they are not bound by existing American legal restrictions on the Central Intelligence Agency in reporting to the US Congress its covert operations.

The world can therefore expect more war, more cloak-and-dagger operations, more of what made Bush so unpopular and America so feared and despised the world over. What's more, with his electoral triumph, the world view of the likes of Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz, the leading neoconservatives in the White House, are all the more on the ascendant, while the chances of moderates to influence policy have been significantly lessened by the very public marginalization or outright removal from office of known moderates such as Colin Powell.

There was a brief time when it seemed that Bush would be more conciliatory, less reckless, a little more willing to listen. The triumphalism and the swagger of his second inaugural dispel all doubts that this is a man who feels he has all the more reason to push ahead with his God-appointed mission.

A little common sense

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

I WAS bemused sometime ago when I read of the congressman who attended a function in the National Penitentiary, mixed with the inmates in a show of democratic fellowship, and later discovered that his pocket had been picked. His expensive Louis Vuitton wallet contained among other things cash in the amount of P7,500, a Treasury check for P50,000 plus, I suppose, his gold credit cards.

A prisoner who was a guest of the State for his expertise in thievery had proved—anonymously, of course—that his victim was easy picking although he was a member of the House of Representatives, or probably because of it. I have not heard that the culprit has been discovered or that the stolen valuables have been recovered through the efforts of the prison authorities, who have proved once again their failure to reform their wayward wards.

I remember that as a young student many decades ago, I lost to pickpockets an expensive Parker pen I had naively clipped on my breast pocket while walking along the University Belt in Manila. I reported the theft to the police precinct in Sampaloc which was much disturbed to learn that the pen belonged to my father who was the president of the Manila municipal board, then still highly esteemed unlike now.

The following morning, a small boy brought me the stolen pen but was rather vague when I asked where it came from. I surmised he had been sent by the police, who knew where to look and demanded it back from the known and familiar felon with whom they were probably in cahoots. The prison authorities would have done as much to right the wrong committed on the careless solon, or at least lessen their embarrassment, but apparently could not.

What really struck me about this ludicrous incident is why it did not occur to the congressman to take the necessary prudence to protect his wallet, or why he had to carry so much money to that prison in the first place. He knew where he was going and it was not to church, not that a church is safe from pickpockets. If one is in a crowded place, no matter how innocent it may look, he must be especially watchful, particularly if he is carrying a loaded wallet.

When William Holden walked the streets of Manila many years ago, a photographer took a series of pictures of him safeguarding his wallet from possible pickpockets. He did not lose his dollars. Our trusting congressman did not take similar precautions, having more confidence in his convicted countrymen in the chaste confines of the Muntinlupa prison. No wonder he lost his pesos.

What added to my disbelief was that this extraordinary legislator was not among the less endowed members of the House of Representatives. He is a be-degreed fellow who even took post-graduate studies in the United States, unlike some of his colleagues who may not even have finished high school. In fact, he is one of the leaders of the chamber, recognized for his intellectual attainments among other impressive distinctions. He should have known better than to lead the prisoners into temptation.

An ordinary person who may not even be literate would have the intelligence to know that one must be extra careful when mixing with known pickpockets, and in their own turf. This congressman was not that vigilant and easily fell prey to the thief who was more clever if less virtuous than his scholarly victim. At that, all that was needed in that contest of wits was not special erudition but only a little common sense.

The laxity of this supposedly intelligent congressman makes me suspect even more the low quality of the members of the House of Representatives. This master of laws from Georgetown University could be so reckless (or stupid?) as to carry the scent of gold into the lair of felons as if to challenge them to prove their expertise in their life's calling. I can imagine how much more dense his other fellow members can be without the benefit of his superior education.

Offhand, I can mention only a few of the congressmen whose credentials I respect, like Rep. Teddy Locsin of Makati and some of my former Law students. Most of the other representatives must be sitting in the lower House on the strength of other recommendations, like guns, money, or dynasty, and not the gray matter upstairs. Intelligence is not an attribute shared by the general membership of the House of Representatives as its shabby record demonstrates.

This was the body that refused to impeach Luzviminda Tancangco of the Commission on Elections despite the serious charges against her. Fifty of its members recently signed a resolution recommending the pardon of Romeo Jalosjos who is serving two life terms for raping an 11-year-old girl. It is also insistent on retaining its pork barrel privileges despite the repugnance of the whole nation to its unashamed avarice.

And how about the Senate, where once trod the likes of Quezon, Osmeña, Recto, Laurel, Sumulong, Roxas, Pelaez, Salonga and other intellectuals? Suffice to remind us of the three misfits who now sit in that once august hall, to taint it with their bare-faced presumptuousness and mediocrity. But at least, as far as is known, none of them has foolishly ventured into that risky den of thieves with a small fortune inviting to be picked.

What's barbaric about 'wet-flag policy'?

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando is like a lightning rod as far as controversy is concerned. Furious debates accompany his every move, and it seems no one can be indifferent to him—they either love him or hate him, and they make no bones about their sentiments.

His latest *pakulo* is no exception. This is the so-called "wet-flag policy," where a truck with two large wet white cloths hanging from its side, patrols major thoroughfares. A pedestrian waiting for a ride in the street, instead of on the sidewalk, gets an unwanted *punas* (swipe) from the wet flags.

Fernando has been roundly criticized for this move, which is par for the course, like his sidewalk clearing operations, the switch from a Traffic Violation Receipt (TVR) to an MTT (Metropolitan Traffic Ticket) system, the "topless men" drive, the construction of male urinals (pink, even) at "strategic" places, the no-physical-contact policy (using digital cameras to detect traffic violations), the Edsa organized bus route project, and others. His only actions which did not elicit bitter criticism seem to be his *estero*-cleaning (part of flood control) operations, the billboard-removal project, and his handling of the garbage disposal problems which hounded Metro Manila until he took over.

Are the criticisms justified? Frankly, I don't think so. Just look at the latest spate of criticisms: The wet-flag policy is barbaric and uncivilized, anti-poor, unjust, inhuman, and, uncalled for (as in, why don't they just arrest the jaywalkers, and be done with it?).

Start with "barbaric" and "uncivilized," which evoke scenes of carnage, torture, brutality. How can a wet cloth swiping a pedestrian, who would not even be subjected to it if he were on the sidewalk, constitute a barbaric and uncivilized act? What is unjust and inhuman about a truck moving down a main thoroughfare with wet flags on its side?

It is not as if these trucks are swooping down on unsuspecting jaywalkers. They are preceded by blinking lights, horn-tooting and warnings over a public address system (the flags themselves carry a message in the Filipino saying: Wait on the Sidewalk, Not on the Street). You have to be deaf and blind not to see them coming—and stubborn as hell not to get out of the way. And does one react to a barbaric and uncivilized act inflicted on him by laughing? Because the jaywalkers do laugh as they get back on the sidewalk to avoid the wet flag.

Now let's go on to the "anti-poor" charge, hurled, it seems, because of a peculiar definition of poverty: one is poor if one takes public transportation; also, one is poor if one is a jaywalker. Hey. That's a cockeyed definition of poverty. There's also a logical fallacy. While it is true that if you are poor, all you can afford is public transportation, it is not true that all who take public transportation are poor. And if the critics say that all jaywalkers, who are breaking the law, are poor, using their crummy logic, are they also saying that only the poor break the law? Please.

Let's look at the "uncalled for" argument, which goes: Why all this gimmickry? Why not just arrest the jaywalkers, and this will certainly have a deterrent effect, without the humiliation that goes with being swiped by the wet flag?

In the first place, one doubts, given all the lights and sounds of warning, that anyone is going to be "humiliated." No comparison here with being labeled "This person is a drug pusher" (jaywalking does not have the same onus as drug pushing; and the "pusher" is just a suspect, while the jaywalker is caught in the act). In the second place, the wet-flag scheme's main objective is really to raise awareness of the rules (people standing on the street to be the first to catch a ride don't even realize, or try to forget, that they are breaking a law).

In its first few days, there seems to be some success because while some do go back on the street as soon as the truck has passed, the vast majority reportedly stay on the sidewalk, having learned a lesson without the pain of arrest.

In the third place, the critics are speaking too soon. If they want arrests, they will be getting arrests. Prison vans are being readied, and by next week, my information goes, they will be moving in the wake of the flag-carrying trucks. I am also told that the very sight of prison vans parked where most of the jaywalking violations occur already has a most salutary effect on potential miscreants.

Fernando is no saint. He certainly has to answer, for example, to some charges about abuses committed by some of his people on the ground who get drunk with the little power they have. There are also charges of overpricing and favoring certain contractors (with regard to the construction of urinals and U-turn slots), which he has answered but must repeat (for example, that the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority estimated the cost of a U-turn slot to be P250,000, which is what the winning contractors are being paid).

But let's face it. He is the best MMDA chair we have ever had. He is competent, tireless and innovative, and he and his wife, unless I am very much mistaken, will pass any lifestyle checks. If we had more of his kind (there are others, but they can be counted probably without using up all of one's fingers and toes) running the country, we won't have to worry about downgrades and collapses.

So get off his back already.

Marcelo's radical proposal

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE ASIAN Development Bank has denied that it conducted the study that found the Philippines ranking second to Bangladesh in magnitude of bribery or irregular payments in public contracts. The ADB said this finding was actually taken from the Global Competitiveness Report, based on the Annual Executive Opinion Survey by the World Economic Forum. The ADB's clarification, however, is small comfort to RP since the corruption issue has figured consistently in reports by various foreign chambers of commerce based here, among them the American and the Australian chambers, as deterring foreign investors.

* * *

In fairness to the administration, however, it appears to have chosen to grab the corruption bull by the horns, and has made fighting it a key agenda. It now has to make its campaign credible. For one thing, as government media chief Cerge Remonde pointed out in a Channel 4 talk show last week which I joined, this administration is the first to raise to Cabinet level the official leading the anti-corruption campaign. Presidential legal adviser Merceditas Gutierrez now also wears the hat of "anti-corruption czarina." Then, too, the arraignment before the graft court yesterday of former Public Estates Authority chief Ernest Villareal for graft and corruption in connection with the highly overpriced Diosdado Macapagal Highway, also augurs well for the drive against corruption. Is he the first big fish caught in the drive?

* * *

In a recent TV show, Gen. Jose Calimlim, who was recently appointed anti-smuggling chief at Subic Freeport, was queried about the administration's seriousness in combating smuggling. The interviewer observed that the names of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and Pampanga Rep. Mikey Arroyo were being dropped by some businessmen seeking to facilitate release of their goods. Calimlim said the Arroyos, when told about this, stressed to him that if any businessman tried to do this, he or she should be arrested, as that person would be acting without their authority. I'm glad this was said over national TV, for the Arroyos must realize that their names are indeed being used in this regard.

* * *

The recent transfer of Trade Secretary Cesar Purisima to the Department of Finance is also being read as indication of this administration's determination to lick graft and corruption, particularly since the department has under it the two major revenue-generating agencies, Customs and the BIR. In this connection, it should be noted that next month Customs Commissioner George Jereos will be retiring and the business community is eagerly awaiting his replacement, in view of numerous complaints about unabated smuggling which is hurting legitimate businesses. Just whom the President will appoint to Customs is very crucial. If she appoints someone with a tarnished image or makes an outright political appointment, it will mean she's not serious.

* * *

The government's campaign against graft and corruption places in the spotlight Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo, who was among the prosecution stars in the impeachment trial of former President Estrada four years ago. I managed to grab a few minutes of interview with this very busy official, who happens to be one of the most credible in government, and he happily noted that when he assumed office, it had only 37 prosecutors, but as an indication of the administration's seriousness in its anti-corruption campaign, he succeeded in getting 51 new prosecutors, mainly fresh law graduates. Marcelo feels he can "jump-start" this bigger number of prosecutors to handle cases and look into the 15,000 tips received from the private sector. In addition to the 88 prosecutors, his office now has 13 investigator-lawyers and 187 investigators involved in the prosecution aspect.

* * *

The ombudsman's high credibility has earned him support for his unrelenting anti-corruption campaign. Speaker Jose de Venecia has arranged for his office to receive P140 million over and above its P530 million budget. Marcelo is very happy about this "very positive response from the House" which will enable him to step up his anti-graft campaign, specifically training his lawyers to do their jobs. In addition, he has sealed an agreement with the European Union to give him 900,000 euros ($1,170,000) annually for three years. He hopes the first tranche will be available by April, so that he can use it for the other half of his office's work—graft prevention.

* * *

After his address before the Catholic bishops last July, the CBCP agreed to his proposal that church-based NGOs be converted into volunteer agents in the anti-corruption drive. Marcelo now envisions using the EU grant to recruit and train these volunteers in three crucial tasks: to monitor the bidding process in government contracts; to monitor the implementation of contracts; and to look into tips on ill-gotten wealth. *Nag-uumpisa na kami,* says Marcelo of his office's partnership with church-based groups.

* * *

Marcelo is poised to make a "radical proposal" that the Sandiganbayan prioritize its cases, so that it can concentrate only on the 40 biggest cases pending before it, beginning with Erap's trial. As he sees it, of the 2,000 cases before the graft court, about 800 are relative minor cases involving amounts of P1 million or less. Marcelo wants these small cases to be turned over to the regional trial courts so that the graft court could concentrate on the 40 big ones. Marcelo says this is necessary since the graft court is understaffed with only five divisions, and there's need to also increase the number of justices there. He says that Sen. Mar Roxas is preparing a bill to amend the law that created the Sandiganbayan to incorporate his proposal.

Bringing TV to the classroom

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

TELEVISION may be derided as the "boob tube," but there is no denying its power. The ease with which novelty songs and dance moves, like "Otso-otso" or "Spaghetti Song," are picked up, learned and popularized attest to the extraordinary "teaching" power of TV, as well as to the viewing public's capacity (even eagerness!) to learn, retain and replicate what they see and hear on this medium.

For five years now, "Knowledge Channel" has been tapping TV's power as an educational medium by airing curriculum-based material that supplement the traditional "chalk and blackboard" lectures of teachers. Though its shows are aired on cable channels, Knowledge Channel Foundation has also embarked on a drive to bring its shows within the reach (or the eyes and ears—and minds) of public school students nationwide. Backed by a memorandum of agreement with the Department of Education, the Knowledge Channel today reaches almost two million elementary students and 700,000 high school students in 1,400 schools throughout 57 provinces.

Rina Lopez Bautista, president and CEO of Knowledge Channel Foundation (KCFI), is particularly proud of the fact that Knowledge Channel is beamed as far north as Itbayat, Batanes and as far south as Bongao, Tawi-tawi.

This is because the foundation has worked, alongside numerous partners and sponsors, to bring not just free TV sets to public schools, but also free cable and satellite access, as well training and orientation to teachers and principals on the optimal use of this teaching tool.

* * *

OVER THE LAST few days, this columnist was with a delegation of officers and staff of KCFI and other entities with the Lopez Group of Companies, as well as other media representatives, for the launch of Team Mindanao. Team Mindanao stands for "Television Education for Muslim Mindanao," a three-year project funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by an alliance of partners led by KCFI.

Team Mindanao is aimed at beaming the Knowledge Channel to 150 public schools and their students in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), bringing "world-class education to those who are in need of it."

Would not the money have been better used to build classrooms or provide schools with such basics as desks and cement floors? Thomas Kral, chief of the Office of Education of USAID, said one of their major concerns about the educational system in the ARMM schools was the high drop-out rate, with a source claiming only three percent of grade one enrollees manage to graduate from elementary, and of these, only 12 percent go on to finish high school. "Why build more classrooms if children are leaving school in such numbers?" Kral asked in an interview. "Perhaps what we need to address is the relevance and quality of the education that these schoolchildren get."

* * *

AT THE LAUNCH of Team Mindanao in Datu Paglas, Maguindanao, which is itself a model of development not just for ARMM but for the whole country (more on this later), a student of the Datu Paglas National High School, accepting "the gift of knowledge" in behalf of other young people in ARMM, declared that "we have entered the world of information technology."

But for some schools and students, Knowledge Channel might well be their portal to the world of modernity. Doris Nuval, KCFI officer in charge of resource mobilization who has been based since November in Cotabato City to oversee Team Mindanao, tells of visiting schools in impoverished areas where the students squatted on floor planks resting on dirt floors. It nearly broke her heart to disqualify such schools, said Doris, mainly because they had no electricity or else their electrical supply was spotty and unreliable.

Part of Team Mindanao project's goals, in fact, is to provide schools in such areas with alternative and renewable energy (such as solar panels), and in other areas without access to cable, access to the Knowledge Channel through satellite technology. Perhaps in areas sunk in the mire of underdevelopment, what young people need is the chance to leapfrog to the world of technological advancements. Thanks to Knowledge Channel, that world has just been opened up to them.

* * *

IS there such a thing as "the politics of dress?" Yes there is, asserts political theorist and historian Dr. Mina Roces.

In fact, on Tuesday, Jan. 25, from 2:30 p.m.-5 p.m., she will expound on this theory when she opens the "Feminist Centennial Lecture Series" with a talk entitled "Ang Tela, Ang Terno, at Ang Boto: the Role of Clothing and Dress in the Suffrage Movement." The lecture will be held at St. John Room, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, St. Scholastica's College, Leon Guinto St., Malate, Manila.

The Feminist Centennial Lecture Series is sponsored by the NGO-GO National Network of the Feminist Centennial in the Philippines and the Department of History, Sociology and Political Science of St. Scholastica's College.

Dr. Roces teaches in the School of History of the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia. She is the author of "Women, Power and Kinship Politics: Female Power in Post-War Philippines" and "Kinship Politics: The Lopez Family: 1956-2000."

In "Ang Tela, Ang Terno at ang Boto," she explores "the politics of dress in the 20th century, focusing on how dress was linked to political agendas and political self-presentations in Philippine politics. It argues that there was a tension between Filipino Dress and Western Dress, which represented opposing identities." Is there a lesson somewhere here for the *fashionistas* of today?

In our image

(With apologies to Stanley Karnow)

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

WE made Baguio in four hours and a half (the half hour accounting for a stop at Starbucks in Hacienda Luisita) on Christmas Day, leaving at 9 p.m. with thoughts of meni-whatever far from our minds. Leslie thought the reports were grossly exaggerated but made sure we didn't eat in the market and only went there once. The cook, as far as I could figure, went shopping in ShoeMart.

Baguio, as those of a certain generation will tell you, isn't what it used to be. And it makes sense that it doesn't. To begin with, it was an American creation, planned as a retreat for government and army personnel, designed for free by Daniel Burnham. Governor William Taft provided the impetus and even went there, traveling half by boat and taking the last stretch on horseback. Since he weighed some 300 pounds, Secretary of War Elihu Root wanted to know how the horse fared.

Envisioned as a summer capital, the temperature there at the hottest time of day rose to 68° F. Naturally there were no *calesas* or horse-drawn vehicles dirtying up the streets. Early buildings in the commercial area resembled American structures in the mining towns of Montana and Colorado. Mining engineers frequented local bars and old prospectors cadged a drink in exchange for their stories.

Once a week, Igorots from around the area would swarm in to buy supplies and sell silver trinkets, textiles and, of course, dogs. We are told that it was "the cleanest and best-organized public market in the Philippines." Camp John Hay belonged to the US Army and then Marshall Douglas MacArthur trained his cadets there.

Who knows, but Kennon Road may be jinxed? While work was still in progress in 1909 and 1911, typhoons wiped out bridges and whole sections of the road. In 1911, a whole mountain split in half, dropping one side down to the valley below, taking bridges with it and piling up debris up to 150 feet. In 1913, $3 million had already been spent on it with Filipinos protesting that the Americans were throwing away their money just to make themselves a vacation place.

The greatest achievement of the mountain people is, of course, the stone-walled rice terraces now endangered. The Ifugaos who built them were considered "pagans" and "uncivilized," their engineering feat largely unappreciated presumably because they wore g-strings and didn't look like the rest of us. They however restructured mountainsides into descending terraces without modern machinery. It is claimed that once upon a time (before World War II), these engineering marvels, some of which rose as high as 75 ft, would reach half-way around the world if stretched end to end. Children inherited the terraces as soon as they were born. Since these formed the basis of all their wealth, grievous crimes naturally concerned rice and the ill effects that could result from the stealing of water supply or the destruction of trees.

The Ifugao had knowledge of irrigation and forestry that amazed college educated scientists. If someone cut a tree in the area, the crime was punishable by beheading. If the water supply ran low, the Ifugao farmer would water his rice only at night with a bamboo contraption punctured with holes. If the situation worsened, a terrace would be sacrificed to save the rest.

The "uncivilized," unsophisticated Ifugao had his own calendar, handed down from generation to generation. He could recite the names of his ancestors for 25 generations. Elaborate rites accompanied the planting and harvesting of rice and events in their lives such as weddings, births and deaths. The spirits were always consulted.

Modern times may well have eroded some of these beliefs and as a result the young no longer wish to tend the terraces. The influx of television, radio and movies may have done much to destroy these beliefs, but the crux of the matter is that "civilization" does not seem to have substituted their beliefs with something that is particularly satisfying nor have they, it appears, profited from the influx of the lowlander into their territory. It was heartbreaking to see antique Chinese jars in the markets in Baguio some years ago that had once formed part of their wealth or their old jewelry and baskets with intricate weaves, shiny with the patina of age. The question is, did we destroy their self-respect and integrity as well as their environment?

Since the Yankees have long been gone, Baguio should look more like us now, don't you think? The green and white modest bungalows are gone, replaced by concrete structures that resemble low-land houses in gated communities. One would have thought that after that horrendous earthquake, Baguio officials would have banned high-rise buildings and come up with a new zoning plan. Needless to say they didn't.

We also have pine trees made of concrete as décor and a lion painted a particular bilious color of gold.

Where the Pines Hotel used to be is now an SM mall and it is rumored that Robinson's isn't far behind. The walled-off property where the ill-fated Hyatt once stood is said to be considered too small to house it.

Will Baguio be able to sustain two humongous malls? Does it matter? I doubt that Baguio officials think along those lines.

An extension to the hotel in John Hay is being constructed and Mines View Park, of course, has no view at all. As usual, permits were given to construct structures that hide the view just as they do in Tagaytay and along the boulevard where eateries now foul up the panorama of the sunset and the bay.

* * *

Comments to bambiharper@yahoo.com

A summer to remember

YOUNG BLOOD

Patricia Ysabel G. Oreta

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

MOST of my friends spent their summer after high school graduation sunbathing on a beach, partying in Boracay, relaxing in Canada or the United States, or touring Europe. After all, the summer after graduation should be "*bakasyon grande,*" as my mom puts it,

Well, I also went on a tour, all right. I went on a tour of the place where I grew up: my hometown, Malabon.

It was the summer of the national elections, and once again, the tiny streets and alleys of Malabon were all walled up with politicians' faces. Everywhere you turned, a politician with his shiny-white smile and air-brushed face would gladly greet you. Everywhere.

Oh, but you wouldn't get tired of seeing the same face every day, because just like Selecta and Magnolia which have flavors of the month, the walls in Malabon also had "faces of the day." By the end of the campaign season, these layers and layers of posters would have reached a thickness of an inch or so. What a waste! Oh well, that's politics, they say.

My grandfather ran for office that summer. And I can't deny that some of the posters also had his face on it. But unlike those running a nationwide campaign, politicians running in local elections didn't stop at just pasting posters and staging motorcades. They had to go through every alley, every house, and every corner to make their intentions known to everyone. And I helped my Lolo with that. In fact, our whole family did.

There was a day when we visited a row of houses right beside the railroad tracks in Barangay Tinajeros—"Home Along da Riles," we called it. Going house to house there was quite an experience, as we had to go up and down, left and right, criss-crossing the railroad tracks. Quite often, some trolleys would pass and we had to go down to avoid "traffic" in the railroad tracks. The houses there were built so close together, and were probably as small as my bedroom.

Another day, we visited houses in Barangay Dampalit along the river, a river notorious for being filled with trash and its foul smell. To get to the different houses, we had to walk on a "*pilapil,*" a narrow strip of cement about a foot wide rising above the river, which served as a catwalk to get to neighboring houses. If you slip, then sorry for you, down the black, smelly river you go. It really posed a danger to the many little kids who lived there.

Then, we went to a place in Barangay Catmon, a garbage dump. Yes, literally a mountain of trash, a Smoky-Mountain-in-the-making. A lot of families actually lived there, making a living by collecting recyclable materials from the trash. Surprisingly, it didn't smell too much of garbage, but of smoke and dust, lots of dust. After an hour there, I could literally scrape off the dust off my ankles and draw a zigzag on it. But how about the families who lived there, 24/7? It was an unsuitable habitat for a human being.

I never knew this part of Malabon in my childhood. All I remember was our beautiful garden back home where I used to run around when I was small, eating freshly picked macopa, santol and Indian mangoes. I was unaware of everything that was happening around me.

But I'm not a kid anymore. The campaign was an eye-opening experience. Now, I know how difficult life can be for many people. And to think that some corrupt government officials still manage to squander and steal the taxes being paid by these poor people.

I know that my Lolo is a good man, and I am happy that he won the elections. He will no longer sit around and helplessly watch all this iniquity. He has the power to make things happen, and I know that he will make good use of it.

As for me, I'm just a college freshman with my whole life ahead of me. But that summer taught me a lot. It taught me to despise corrupt government officials even more. It showed me how blessed I am to have what little I have now, and I am truly grateful for this. It taught me how to control myself whenever I don't get what I want. But most of all, it taught me that God didn't give me all these blessings so that I can use them all for myself, but so that I can share them with others who need them most.

Now, that's what I call *bakasyon-grande*!

Patricia Ysabel G. Oreta, 17, is a first year BS Psychology student at the University of the Philippines, Diliman.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO . . .?

Cavite land scam

THE MAY 2004 elections may have given Federico Poblete another term as mayor of Kawit, Cavite, but a specter from his past terms as Kawit mayor from 1988-1998 still haunts him.

Poblete and several town officials are still facing graft charges before the Sandiganbayan for the sale of a portion of land on Bacoor Bay to FJI Property Developers Inc. for P123 million, in what the media had dubbed the "Cavite land scam."

The land belonged to Kawit, according to the town council, and was a "foreshore land," or a part of seashore between the high-water and low-water marks. Commonwealth Act No. 141 prohibits the sale of foreshore lands.

The National Bureau of Investigation asked the Office of the Ombudsman to prosecute Poblete, Rodrigo Caimol, then vice mayor and Bienvenido Pobre, Juanito Galang, Ricardo Flores, Pedro Paterno, Salvador Olaes, Rosario Nolasco, Leo Padilla and Hernan Jamir, then Sangguniang Bayan members.

On April 5, 2000, the Ombudsman formally charged Poblete and the other town officials with violating the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act. The case was filed with the Sandiganbayan and was assigned to the Second Division.

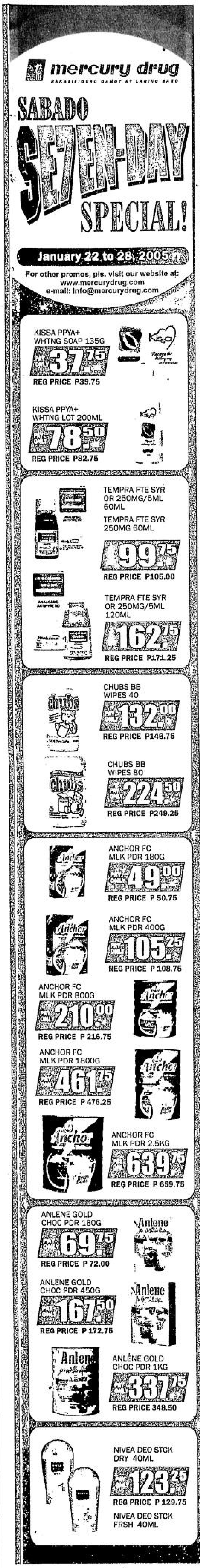
When arraigned in June and September 2000, the accused pleaded not guilty, except for Jamir who was believed to have fled to the United States.

Poblete was agrarian reform undersecretary (during the Estrada administration) when the case was filed. He insisted that the land was alienable and disposable based on government surveys and maps, showing the property to be part of the Kawit land mass. He also cited Sections 18 and 22 of the Local Government Code calling for self-reliance and giving corporate powers to LGUs to acquire real property.

Poblete ran for mayor of Kawit and won new terms in the 2001 and 2004 elections.

Case status: The trial is ongoing, with the prosecution presenting its witnesses and evidence. The next trial dates are Jan. 28 and Feb. 18, 2005.

DJ Yap, PDI Research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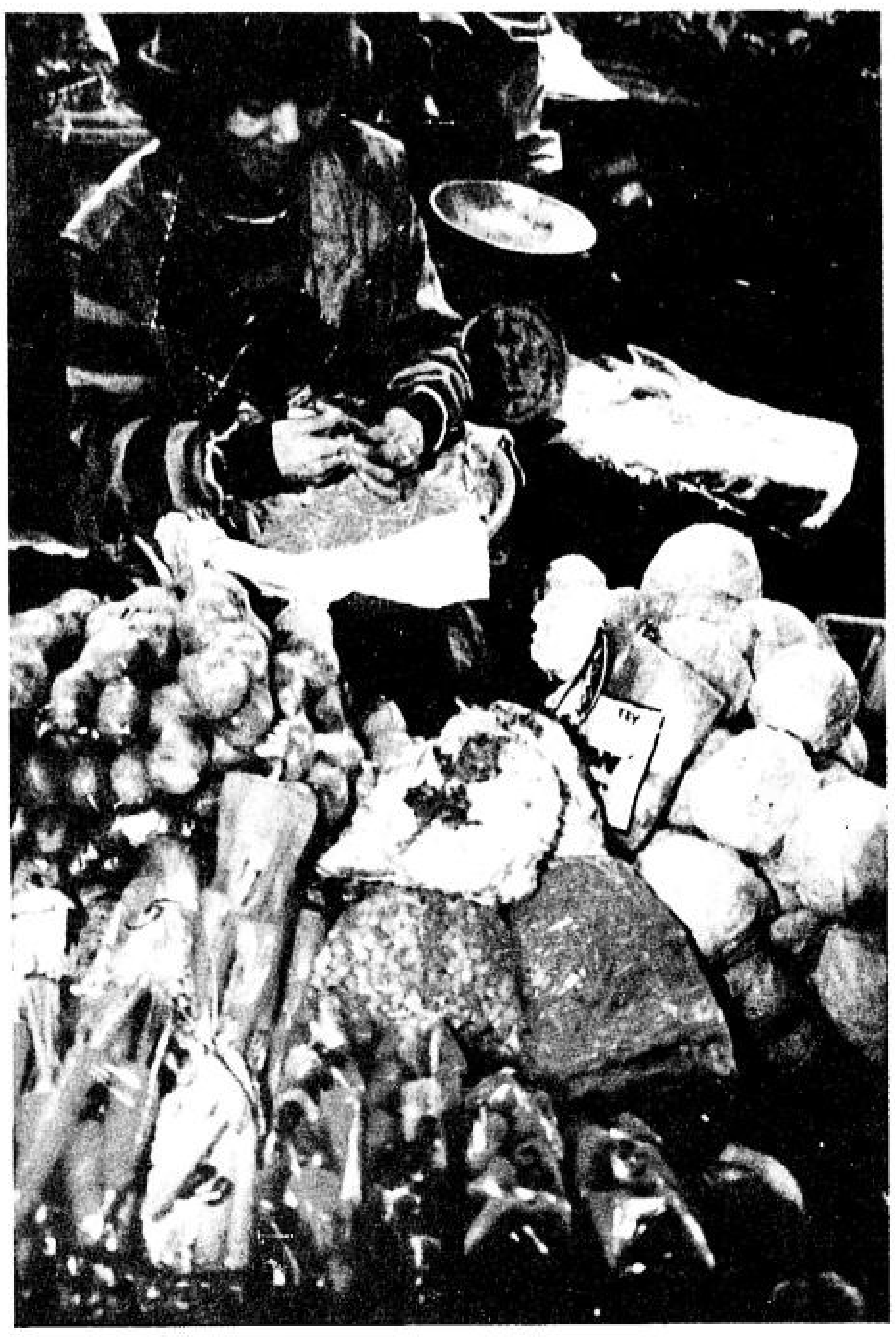
DA contributing to veggie shortage


VEGETABLES on sale by the sidewalk

PDI PHOTO

EVEN as consumers reel under the rising prices of vegetables due to a shortage in supply, tons and tons of imported vegetables rot in Manila piers. •

The lack of supply is a seasonal occurrence and comes with the rainy season. This season, the supply situation worsened because of the typhoons that destroyed agricultural farms in Luzon. In fact, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap, in a media interview last December, publicly admitted the scarce supply of vegetables in the local market.

There's another reason: the difficulty in securing permits for vegetable importation from the Department of Agriculture. This after the DA recalled, in October 2004, import permits on carrots which were previously issued by the Bureau of Plant Industry. The DA directive gave grounds for the Bureau of Customs to seize some 30 containers of carrots in the South Harbor alone. These were allowed to rot even as the government was contemplating at that time on distributing food coupons to hungry families in the metropolis. The inefficiency of the bureaucracy did not end there: customs had to spend a considerable sum to dispose of the rotten vegetables without endangering public health.

A far greater injury was inflicted on the consuming public with the issuance of Customs Memorandum Order 37-2004 upon the request of Yap. He recommended the measure invoking the Safeguard Measures Act (Republic Act 8800) which was enacted to protect domestic industries. The order, which took effect on Dec. 18, 2004, imposes at least P61 per kilo in "special safeguard duty" (SSG) on onion imports.

This has sent the price of onions skyrocketing since the last holiday season; if this goes on, this could drive the price beyond the affordability level of consumers. Instead of stabilizing the price of onions, the SSG is aggravating the country's already dire food supply situation.

The only beneficiaries of the SSG are the smugglers of vegetables and price manipulators who make a killing, especially during supply shortages and holiday seasons. With their huge profits, these smugglers—who do not pay duties and taxes—are now enlisting government officials to silence the growing clamor for the recall of this unjust and anti-people measure.

More than the effects of last year's typhoons, the SSG measure is wreaking havoc on the country's food supply. Vegetable importers and businessmen are canceling their orders rather than pay the onerous SSG duty.

—**HAZEL JOICE BUGARIN,**
Vegetable Importers, Exporters & Vendors Association (Phils.),
322 Matiisin St.,
Wagas Tondo, Manila

Hunters Team mars Cebu's image

"DEATH Squad" in Davao City. But Cebu City has a worse version—the Hunters Team. In his column (PDI, 12/30/04), Júan L. Mercado revealed that Cebu Mayor Tomas Osmeña "has already cash-on-the scalp bounties: P20,000 for cops who kill or disable any criminal."

The idea is really primitive. Lynching, or hanging criminals from the nearest lamppost without due process, has long been abolished because it is a cruel, disgraceful and inhuman form of punishment. I cannot imagine its revival!

Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., who is from Cebu, certainly abhors the idea of maiming criminals. Our justice system in Cebu City works very efficiently and there is no valid reason to disregard the rule of law. Good intention? The path to hell is paved with good intentions!

Due process is a constitutional guarantee enshrined under our Bill of Rights. We denounce dictatorships because of their insidious tendency to violate human rights.

Criminals are still human beings. They are presumed innocent until proven guilty, so they are entitled to a modicum of due process. The purpose for which the Hunters Team has been created can never be justified. The "end justifies the means" is Machiavellian and has no relevance in a civilized society. Democracy triumphs by upholding—not by suppressing—the rights of the individual.

The fall of Bastille should remain a grim reminder for those who violate human rights and ignore people's clamor for due process. We have our own experience with dictatorship. It failed miserably because we hold the rule of law more precious than anything else. Mayor Osmeña has forgotten the odious experience of the past.

The Hunters Team is propping up a dictator in the guise of pursuing a just cause.

Cebu holds the distinct honor of having produced two Supreme Court chief justices, both known for their adherence to the rule of law. The actuations of Mayor Osmeña do not speak well of the example held up by the two illustrious sons of Cebu.

—**ERASTO D. SALCEDO,**
retired RTC judge,
Tagum City

LETTERS

Co-ops deserve tax incentives

ALARM bells should be ringing by now over the proposal of the Department of Finance to lift the tax exemptions for cooperatives.

As of 2003, the 31,000 operating cooperatives in the country have contributed more than P517 billion to the national economy, almost 12 percent of the gross domestic product. Removing what little incentives they enjoy—amounting to only a little more than P5 billion as against the hundreds of billions enjoyed by multinationals in the export processing zones—is to threaten the jobs of the 1.5 million Filipinos and the welfare of 5 million cooperative members nationwide. The cooperatives' tax exemptions are among the reasons why they continue to flourish in the country.

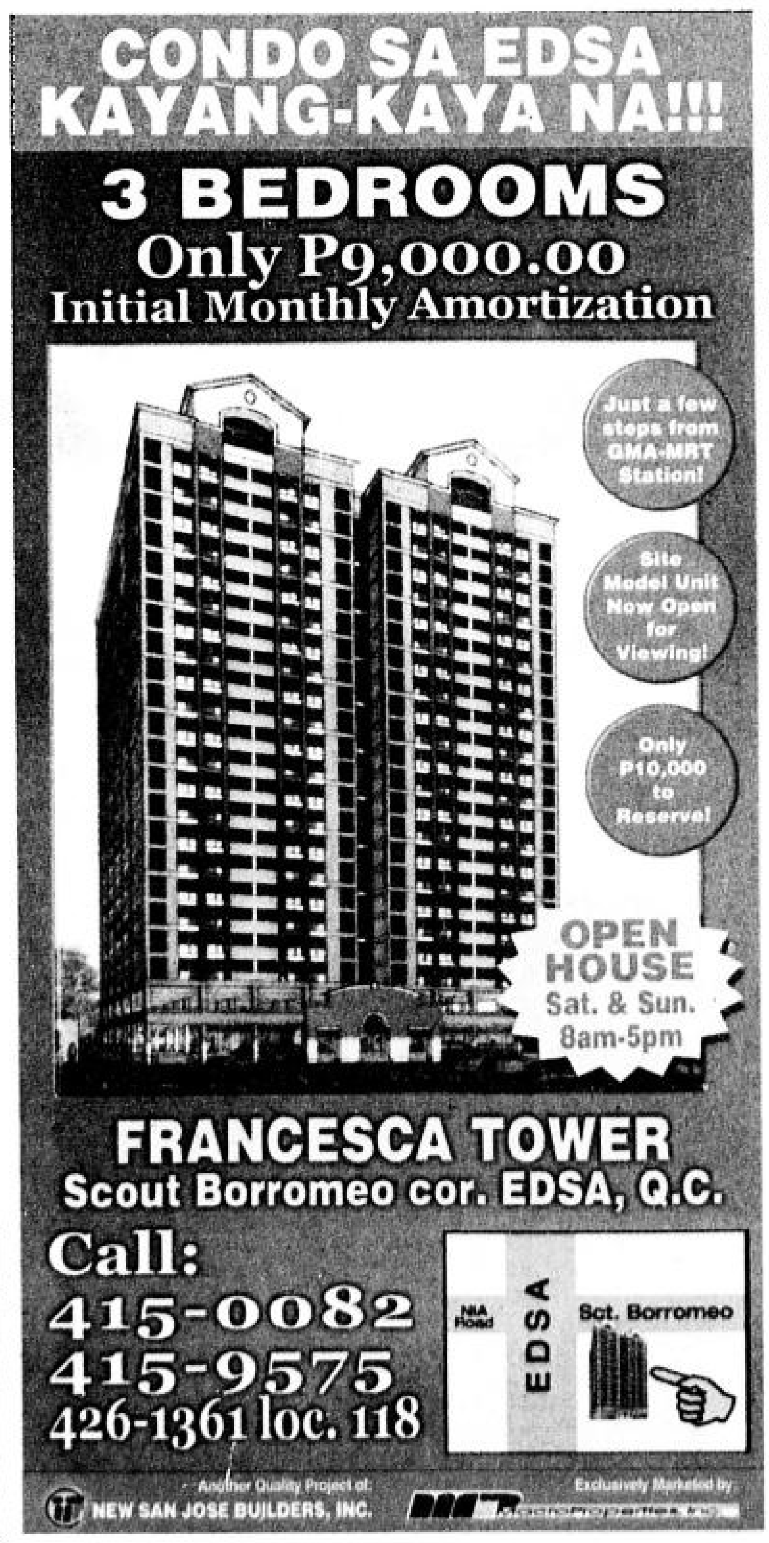
It is true some dubious cooperatives have abused such incentives, but this is no reason to punish the whole cooperative movement. In a globalized economy, where the large multinationals are allowed every opportunity to rake in huge profits while the workers are left with the crumbs, the cooperatives perform several social service functions that an inefficient government has neglected.

The members of cooperatives, including the so called "multimillion cooperatives," are mostly poor people. Hence, they should not be compared with multimillion corporations, which are owned by rich capitalists. They should not be taken for cash cows that can afford to bleed for a cash-strapped government that does not know how to get its revenue-generating agencies to do their work.

Cooperatives extend low-interest rate loans to members, with minimal documentary requirements and practically no collateral, thus enabling the poor to have access to small capital for livelihood. Cooperatives also sell low-priced goods (as they are not subject to value added tax) to company-based employees who are members of consumer cooperatives. Some of them even provide insurance coverage.

Cooperatives that abuse these incentives should be investigated and their officials punished accordingly. But it is not the incentive structures themselves that are to blame, but the indiscretions of a few. Government is better advised to go after the hundreds of billions in foregone revenues lost to tax incentives handed out like candies to union-busting foreign investors in export processing zones. And it should be their patrons in agencies like the Board of Investments and the Philippine Export Zone Authority who should be scrutinized, not the little people from the ranks of workers.

—**DANIEL L. EDRALIN,**
chair, Alliance of Progressive Labor,
102 Scout De Guia St.,
Barangay Sacred Heart,
Diliman Quezon City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Sweeping judgment

I DIDN'T vote for Fernando Poe Jr. last elections. I chose Raul Roco, not because FPJ was just an actor but because I believed then that Roco was the most qualified candidate for president.

I am writing this letter in reaction to the column, "Susan, Marcos also stole our dreams" of Antonio Montalvan. (PDI, 1/3/05) Obviously, he made a judgment on the character of FPJ based on the kind of people who went to his wake, Juan Ponce Enrile, Imelda Marcos, Imee Marcos, Ernesto Maceda, Joseph Estrada, Francis Escudero. He did not mention the other people who visited FPJ at the hospital—Randy David, Conrad de Quiros, Cory Aquino. Does this mean that David, De Quiros and Aquino are also guilty of "stealing our dreams"? By Montalvan's logic, FPJ was guilty by association. Erap and Ferdinand Marcos are thieves and tyrants, therefore FPJ was also a thief and a tyrant.

Montalvan should be told that FPJ never accepted any gift or favor from Erap in exchange for any political support. He even returned the car Erap gave to him after the latter won the presidency. FPJ also didn't proclaim to the world his works of charity, which can't be said of politicians today. At the height of Edsa 3, he called David to help the administration in preventing bloodshed. Those were definitely class acts, worthy of emulation.

Montalvan believes that Susan should have refrained from talking against the injustice done to her husband and should not have lashed at the media, like ABS-CBN, for manipulating the truth just so their chosen candidate (Noli de Castro) would win. For Montalvan, Susan does not have any right to denounce repression because "nothing was heard from them" against the dictatorship. For Montalvan, those who didn't say a word against the Marcoses don't have the right to cry for justice. Their howls and cries should be disregarded because they don't belong to Edsa 1 and 2.

Pray that nobody from the Marcoses gets back to power, lest that kind of thinking be used against Montalvan and his kind.

—**NEREO COSTUNA JR.,**
nercos@hotmail.com

Inappropriate celebrations

CONRADO de Quiros' column, "Demons" (1/4/05) hit the nail right on the head: In the wake of the tsunami disaster and the recent killer typhoons, it was downright mortifying that we held three lavish New Year's Eve parties (in Metro Manila alone) while every major Southeast Asian capital had canceled theirs.

More than the millions of pesos spent on fireworks instead of on relief goods for the disaster victims, what offended me was the actual staging of city-wide year-end celebrations. Fireworks and revelry in the face of so much death and suffering are insensitive, unseemly and downright vulgar. Mayor Lito Atienza and his city officials making merry onstage at his Manila Bay party were an unspeakably lurid sight. (The man claims he is pro-life and is so vociferously against all forms of population management. Yet he showed no respect for the thousands of lives lost during the tsunami by dancing shamelessly on national television.)

By some perverse logic, perhaps, the organizers of the three events thought that Filipinos were exempt from the global mourning because we were ourselves victims of many tragedies this year. Perhaps, it never crossed their minds that precisely because of our experience with tragedies, we should have been the first ones to commiserate and show our solidarity with other peoples of the world who have been tragedy-victims themselves.

I would be a hypocrite if I said I didn't mark the coming of the New Year with joy and laughter; like De Quiros, I am certainly not saying that it should have been otherwise. (I had a happy, sumptuous dinner with my family, and shared a pizza at midnight with my sister-in-law.) What I am saying, I suppose, is that there is behavior that is appropriate in sorrowful times, and behavior that is glaringly inappropriate. Maybe it's difficult to determine what is "appropriate." But it doesn't take much to figure out that the lavish parties at Ayala-Paseo, the Baywalk and the Fort most certainly weren't.

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DENR stops manganese mining in Vizcaya tree-planting site

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—Environment officials here have stopped the mining operation for manganese deposits in a village in Quezon town, some 20 km from here, after a fact-finding team found violations of environmental laws.

Antonio Principe, regional director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, also ordered the seizure of heavy equipment being used by the Kablaaw Manganese Association Inc. (KMAI) for its mining operation.

The provincial government earlier granted the KMAI a special permit to dispose of and haul manganese ore at a 10-hectare reforestation area at Sitio Burburnay in Barangay Bonifacio in Quezon.

A DENR inspecting team earlier found violations of the KMAI's environmental compliance certificate (ECC), primarily the use of heavy equipment for its "small-scale" mining activities, according to Roberto Apigo, provincial environment officer.

Apigo questioned the entry of the KMAI into the area, which, he said, was covered by a community-based forest management (CBFM) agreement with another people's organization.

He said the KMAI also did not obtain a special land use permit from the DENR or an area clearance from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, as required by the ECC.

Clearing operations for the mining project have reportedly caused the destruction of about 3,000 G'melina trees, according to the investigation report submitted to Apigo.

The site is within a reforestation project which has been undertaken by DENR and the Dumayop Magat Agro-forestry Developers Association Inc. (Dimadai).

The government has poured in P34 million for the project, obtained through a loan from the Japan Bank International Cooperation (JBIC), Apigo said.

Investigation showed that the KMAI had been extracting manganese deposits from the area through the use of two bulldozers. About 150 laborers were reportedly working at the site, with each of them being paid P300 by a private contractor for every cubic meter of manganese ore dug up.

But Ericson Alvarez of the KMAI denied that his group's entry into the area was illegal. He said the mining operation was covered by a permit from the provincial government and an ECC by the Environmental Management Bureau.

He admitted, however, that they had been using heavy equipment to extract manganese deposits. "We only use the bulldozer for scraping off the topsoil of the mining area," he said. *Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Eagle sign there's still hope for RP environment

DAVAO CITY—Filipinos have reason to hope amid environment disasters, as long as there are still eagles in the forest, says an American eagle expert who helped 'midwife' Pag-asa, the country's first eagle hatched and bred in captivity.

Dr. James Grier, the American wildlife scientist who helped hatched the first captive-bred Philippine eagle here when such was still unheard of 13 years ago, said there's no reason for conservation efforts to stop now.

According to Grier, four more eagles have been spotted in the Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park in the last two years, in one of the first eagle studies made outside of Mindanao.

"It's a good sign, that the birds are still there," he said, even as news about typhoons and environment disasters continue to hit the country and different parts of the world.

Reason to hope

"It is enough reason to hope. As the eagle goes, so goes the country," said Grier, professor of zoology at the North Dakota State University, who is here as speaker for an 11-day training on raptor research and management technique sponsored by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund.

When Grier first helped Domingo Tadena, deputy director for conservation breeding of the Philippine Eagle Foundation, hatched Pag-asa on Jan. 15, 1992, such things were still unheard of in Mindanao.

Grier, who is known for his extensive research on bald eagles, was also the first to successfully breed eagles in captivity using artificial insemination. He did it at Cornell University in 1972, two decades before the successful hatching of the first captive Philippine eagle.

After a series of hatching failures here, he had successfully hatched Pag-asa, whose name symbolized the country's hope, he said.

Conservationists believe that the presence of the Philippine eagle, a vanishing species, speaks of the health of the environment and the quality of life of the people.

Grier said the eagle, which needs a very big forest area to breed, only acts as 'ambassador' for other plant and animal species. "When you protect the eagle, you're also protecting the environment," he said.

Looking forward

Now, Philippine eagle research is also looking forward to training eagle researchers outside Mindanao especially in those remaining forest areas of the country where eagles have been sighted.

"Eagles in Luzon, Samar, Leyte and some parts of Mindanao have not been studied so far," says Grier, adding that there's very little known about Philippine eagles outside of Mindanao.

"We want to know what makes them thrive, and survive, how they deal with typhoons because these areas where they've been spotted are known to be prone to typhoons the whole year round. There's still much to learn about the eagles."

"We should not give up because it's not over yet," said Grier, "The (conservation) work must go on." *Germelina Lacorte, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

VINCENT CABREZA/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

CLEANUP time in Baguio City continues as workers get busy cleaning an overpass in the city following its bout with meningococcemia.

Baguio folk raising ₱5M in 'health investment'

BAGUIO CITY—Many Baguio residents admit to suffering psychological fatigue over the meningococcemia crisis but a few locals have discovered a way to scratch that itch.

Some 50 Baguio residents have started raising P5 million to build a hospital that they will literally own and local doctors are encouraging the rest of the community to chip in.

Dr. Richard Arceo, a physical therapist of the Baguio Medical Center and the project's core advocate, said health care has never been considered a healthy investment here.

The influence of *mambunongs* and *mumbakis* (ritual priests of Benguet, Mt. Province and Ifugao) still reign in the provinces near Baguio, Arceo said, "because health care remains very expensive for the average poor."

Arceo said alternative medicine and folk remedies are far more economic.

"In my experience, patients who finally agree to be hospitalized, or worse, undergo surgery, [are prepared to] forfeit [their] life savings, because the natural tendency of people is to obtain medical services only at the [advanced stages of] their ailments," he said.

Meningococcemia, the fatal meningitis strain that has killed at least 19 people here since March 2004, has been a very expensive moral lesson about health investments, he said.

"I've seen patients give up the prescribed medicine for something cheaper. But that meant they are taking shortcuts that do not help them at all, so they suffer. I am tired of seeing my patients suffer unnecessarily," he said.

Arceo said Baguio residents might find more solace in securing the services of a hospital they own because that is where their money is invested.

The profits are potentially high, gauging from the 200 daily average admissions of each of Baguio's eight hospitals, he said.

A cooperative-owned hospital can also expand into a series of independent, yet, network-supervised hospitals in the Cordillera, and perhaps the whole country, Arceo said.

It has full backing from the Baguio-Benguet Credit Cooperative Inc. (BBCCI), one of the most successful cooperatives in the country, he said.

Although not BBCCI-administered, the proposed network of cooperative hospitals are being guided by the institution's experts, Arceo said.

A cooperative hospital in Baguio is crucial, he said, because of the logistical situation that health care finds itself in the Cordillera.

The region has only 27 private hospitals supporting 35 government hospitals and clinics that service 1,435,031 residents.

Only 79 government doctors man these hospitals. Baguio hosts two of these government facilities, and six of the private institutions.

Arceo said a Mindanao-based health care initiative proves the viability of public-led health care investments, but he said his proposition is closer to the tenets of the Philippine cooperative law.

But he said the proposed Baguio cooperative hospital project will be less sophisticated, because it will try to get every Baguio resident, including market vendors, to invest P5,000. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Bounty makes man wanted for slayings turn self in

IMUS, Cavite—After almost three days in hiding, the suspect in the murder of three family members in Indang, Cavite turned himself in to police Thursday saying he feared for his life while denying that he had anything to do with the killings.

Senior Supt. Roberto Rosales, Cavite police director, said suspect Federico Rupido, 38, sent surrender feelers to Indang Mayor Lope Tepora on Thursday through his elder brother and other relatives.

Rosales said Tepora, police and the suspect's relatives, fetched Rupido at around 7:30 p.m. from his friend's house in Barangay Soro-soro, Biñan, Laguna where he hid after he was tagged as the killer of Doroteo Diate, his wife Catalina and son Marvin on Tuesday evening.

Chief Insp. Ramil Montilla, Indang police chief, said the suspect told him that he decided to surrender after he saw TV news about the P300,000 reward police put on his head.

Shoot-to-kill

Montilla said the suspect was frightened by the shoot-to-kill order issued by Rosales a day after the killings.

The police then took the suspect to the crime scene in Barangay Banaba Cerca where he was met by angry residents and relatives of the victims.

Rosales said he immediately ordered the transfer of Rupido to the police jail in Camp Pantaleon Garcia here to "avoid a possible escalation of this unfortunate event."

"We all know that the emotions of the Diates are still high. Having the suspect in Indang jail could trigger another untoward incident. As far as the police is concerned, Rupido is safer here in Imus," Rosales said.

Montilla said the suspect had also undergone a paraffin test at the crime laboratory to see if he had indeed fired a gun.

He said the result of the test could still be credible even after three days "as long as he did not do anything to clean his hands of any gun powder traces."

Weapon missing

Montilla said they have also yet to identify the owner of the gun and recover it.

Inside his detention cell, Rupido refused to answer media questions, but insisted he was innocent.

But when he was asked where he was when the shooting happened, Rupido said he had already gone to bed after their barangay chair took him to a nearby clinic.

He said although he heard several gunshots being fired, he did not bother to look where it was coming from as he has gone weak after Catalina hit him with a steel pipe in the head.

He denied owning a gun.

But his statements contradicted his wife's earlier statements to the police where she said that her husband did not come home after he left several hours before the shooting took place. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

DOH confirms meningo fatality in town in Leyte

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

PALO, Leyte—The Department of Health in Eastern Visayas yesterday confirmed that the year-old girl from Pastrana town who died Wednesday had meningococcemia.

Boyd Cerro, regional sentinel nurse, said health officials identified 22 persons who were in contact with the child, including the immediate members of her family, relatives and some neighbors.

Cerro stressed that those who had been in contact with the child have no reason to panic because they were given antibiotics and other medicines as a preventive measure.

However, Cerro said they have advised the municipal health unit of Pastrana to monitor the health conditions of the girl's parents and her siblings.

The child was buried hours after her death at the public cemetery of Pastrana, 28 km from Tacloban City.

Phivolcs sets sights on Mt. Kanlaon after emissions

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) office on Negros Island is now closely monitoring the Mt. Kanlaon volcano after white smoke was seen coming out of the volcano's crater starting at around 9 a.m. yesterday.

Phivolcs, however, said there was still no cause for alarm since the volcano continues to be seismically quiet even it had been emitting grayish volcanic ash.

However, Phivolcs yesterday advised the public to avoid entering the four-kilometer radius Permanent Danger Zone because phreatic explosions may suddenly occur without warning.

Phreatic eruptions are steam-driven explosions that occur when water beneath the ground or on the surface is heated by magma, lava, hot rocks, or new volcanic deposits.

The intense heat of such material (as high as 1,170°C for basaltic lava) may cause water to boil and generate an explosion of steam, water, ash, blocks.

Phivolcs also recommended the suspension of all treks to the volcano's summit until further notice.

Mt. Kanlaon, rising at an elevation of 2,465 meters, is the highest in Central Philippines. It is located in the boundary of Negros Occidental and Negros Oriental, straddling Canlaon City on the Oriental side and La Carlota City on the Occidental side.

The Negros Occidental provincial government yesterday placed rescue groups on alert as a precaution, said Jose Ma. Valencia, chief of staff of Gov. Joseph Marañon.

A Phivolcs advisory issued at 1 p.m. yesterday said the volcano exhibited a sudden but brief period of ash emission.

The Phivolcs Kanlaon Volcano Observatory at the La Carlota City College reported moderate emission of grayish volcanic plume at about 9:30 a.m.

The grayish steam rose to an approximate height of 500 meters above the active crater and drifted west-northwest and southwest. No volcanic earthquake was recorded, Phivolcs said.

"This observations suggest the activity is hydrothermal in nature and occurring at very shallow levels near the crater floor," Phivolcs said.

INQUIRER Visayas

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Massacre leaves Kalibo folk asking why

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Kalibo, Aklan

THE STORES have reopened, vendors have returned and the bullet-riddled vehicles are gone. So are the trails of blood, cleansed by rain in the past days.

But occasionally, pedestrians along Rizal and F. Quimpo Streets would point at spots where victims of last Sunday's carnage fell.

In eateries, Internet cafés, offices and coffee shops, talks are still mostly about PO1 Jonathan Moreño and why he went on a rampage killing two of his superiors, three other policemen and a 10-year-old girl before he himself was gunned down.

The death toll rose to eight after physician Dem Tirol, one of the 31 wounded, succumbed to a bullet wound in the left eye Thursday night.

Tirol, an internist at the Dr. Rafael Tumbokon Memorial Hospital in Kalibo, died around 6:30 p.m. at the Iloilo Doctors Hospital in Iloilo City.

He was among the bystanders and revelers near the Kalibo police station in Rizal Street who was hit when Moreño opened fire on his fellow policemen.

As they mourn the dead and comfort the wounded, they also start to pick up the pieces in the aftermath of the worst crime to have happened in Kalibo, known to be a peaceful town.

The tragedy, which happened on the last day of the Ati-Atihan festival, has shocked Aklanons who are proud to host what is considered the merriest and the most fascinating festivals in honor of the Sto. Niño.

The festival held every third Sunday of January is known for its spontaneous merry-making and street dancing where anyone could join any of the tribes dancing in the main streets of Kalibo.

PEDESTRIANS along Rizal and F. Quimpo Streets in Kalibo, Aklan, point at these spots where victims of last Sunday's carnage fell. ARNOLD ALMACEN

Movement

The killings dampened the last day of the festival as many revelers decided to go home early. The tragedy also became a test of their faith.

"I hope the people will not be traumatized and understand that these things can happen despite our prayers," said Kalibo Bishop Jose Romeo Lazo.

He said Aklanons should move on even as they continue to help and pray for the victims.

Lazo has spearheaded the "January 16 Movement" to campaign for help for the families of the dead and the wounded. Gov. Carlito Marquez and other officials have also given financial support to the victims.

Marquez has ordered the Philippine flag to be displayed in half-mast in all government offices and in police and military camps in the province.

But the horror and pain for the victims remain and the shock and disbelief linger among the people.

"You can never quantify the grief in losing your husband," said Ramona Magayanes, wife of Supt. Odelardo Magayanes, the provincial police director, who was the first to be gunned down by Moreño.

Married to the slain police officer for 12 years, she now has to raise their three children age 9 to 11 on her own.

Jan-Jie Gorion, 36, wife of SPO1 Juan Gorion who was also killed by Moreño, said she knew that her husband's work was dangerous. "But I did not expect him to die this way."

"I love him," she said as she cried near the casket of her husband. They have four children, the eldest at 13 and the youngest aged 7.

Policemen are also mourning the death of their colleagues especially of Magayanes and Chief Insp. Manuel Ilejay Jr., Kalibo's police chief.

"We are saddened. It is so hard to understand that they were killed by one of our own," said Insp. Jose Gonzales, acting Kalibo police chief.

Gonzales said Magayanes and Ilejay were loved by their men and very close to them because the two officials were good-natured and treated them well.

The pain and horror were also still fresh for those who were spared.

"Nong, Nong, buligi ko. Buhi pa ko (Sir, sir, help me. I'm still alive)," Conrado Indelible, still remembered a wounded SPO1 Juan Gorion pleading.

Indelible, news and public affairs supervisor of radio station drRU of RGMA was in the public plaza when he heard the gunshots.

His reporter's instinct made him rush to the scene where he chanced on Gorion.

Invectives

He helped three other policemen pull Gorion from the sidewalk while he was holding his radio handset and reporting what he was witnessing.

He hid beside a vehicle when he heard gunshots. It was only later that he found out that Gorion died and he himself was wounded in the hand.

PO1 Antonio Monreal Jr., 27, said he heard Moreño shouting what he thought were invectives. *"Palapit kamo di* (Come here)," he heard Moreño, as he fired at them.

Monreal had bullet wounds in his right shoulder, right leg and left thigh.

PO1 Joseph Gebucion, 26, said he met Moreño and first asked him where the gunshots were coming from and who was doing the shooting.

Moreño did not answer but changed the magazine of his M16, loaded a bullet in the chamber and started firing five meters away from Gebucion and other policemen. Gebucion was wounded in the shoulder.

Investigators said Moreño could have broke down because of death threats from the camp of Jose Kim "Boy" Cuadra."

Cuadra, 50, is allegedly the top drug lord in Western Visayas. Moreño and two other policemen caught him in possession of shabu in April 2003 at the Caticlan airport after vacationing in Boracay.

Police said Moreño feared for his life after he became a star witness in the case against Cuadra. He was reassigned to the Aklan Provincial Police Office as close-in security of former provincial director Senior Supt. Nemesio Neron and later of Magayanes.

Cuadra has denied pressuring or threatening Moreño. Authorities, however, have tightened security at the Kalibo jail where Cuadra is detained.

But many questions still remain. Did Moreño go berserk or was it a hit on the police officials? Was he paid, threatened or pressured? Was he acting alone?

Moreño's former superiors and those who knew him said they could not imagine him doing the killings.

The policeman was described as disciplined, dedicated in work and respectful.

"The one who went berserk last Sunday was a totally different person from the one that I knew," said Neron of his former close-in security.

Neron said he was "surprised and terribly shocked" upon hearing of what Moreño did.

Unanswered questions

He said the 31-year-old Moreño, a native of Toboso town in Negros Occidental, followed orders and was responsible.

"I could not say anything bad about him while he was with me," he said.

Senior Insp. Christopher Prangan, BSPU deputy chief, said he had no complaints on how Moreño did his work and could not recall that Moreño was reprimanded or punished for violating regulations.

Policemen at the Aklan Provincial Police Office (APPO) remembered Moreño as quiet and respectful to senior officers.

He shared a room with other members of Magayanes' security detail beside Magayanes' quarters at the provincial police headquarters in Camp Pastor Martelino in Kalibo.

Neron said he told Moreño to be careful after they received reports that Cuadra's group was after him.

Despite the threats, Moreño even personally followed up the case against Cuadra when Neron was busy. He said Moreño "had guts, *matapang na bata* (a brave man)."

"But what triggered the shooting? What made him do it?" Neron said.

For Aklanons, the healing will only be complete when these questions are finally answered.

Magayanes' death advances family reunion

By Job Belen
Contributor

ALMOST two weeks before he was killed, Supt. Odelardo Magayanes had invited his family that lives in Malilipot, Albay, to come to Aklan for a visit.

The family's trip was realized earlier than the scheduled date as Magayanes' mother Socorro, brothers Antonio and Celestino, sister Severina and his nephews and nieces traveled to Aklan on Jan. 17, the day after the Aklan provincial police director was killed on Sunday during the Ati-atihan Festival.

Socorro, 75, did not even know that their trip was due to the untimely death of her youngest child "Odi," Magayanes' nickname, who was killed by his own security escort, PO1 Jonathan Moreño.

Vacation

All that the mother of Magayanes knew was that she and her relatives would be going to Boracay on invitation of Odi.

Magayanes, 40, a graduate of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Class '87, phoned his mother last Jan. 4 and invited her and his siblings to have a vacation in Boracay, all expenses shouldered by him, said Helen Baroma, caregiver of Socorro, or Tia Coring as her neighbors call her.

Tia Coring stays at their simple house where Odi and other children visit her at least once a year.

Baroma said Tia Coring became sad when Odi did not greet her on New Year's Eve as he used to.

But last Jan. 4, she was happy when Odi invited her to Boracay.

Eddie Bitara, Magayanes' neighbor in Barangay San Francisco here, said the slain police officer was very kind, polite and humble.

PMA graduate

Bitara said Magayanes, the first PMA graduate from this small town of Albay and said to be one of the youngest police provincial directors in the country, never came home with a bodyguard. "Whenever Odi visited his mother, he never forgot to visit his neighbors as a gesture of respect to the elderly and for friendship," he added.

"We like his attitude, he was so very humble. In fact, only a few of us in the village knew that he was a top-ranking police official," Bitara disclosed.

Jean Basallote, Magayanes' teacher at the Tabaco National High School where he finished his secondary course, said he was an achiever.

"I saw him sometime last year in Tabaco City and he told me that he was planning to take the bar examination this year," Basallote added.

Magayanes had three children. His wife is a doctor, known to the Magayanes family only as Mona.

Sinulog: More than a festival, it's an act of devotion

By Jolene R. Bulambot
Cebu City

THE DIN of the drums, the dazzling colors, elaborate and spectacular dance performances highlighted the silver anniversary of Cebu's Sinulog Festival.

Amid the scorching heat, hundreds of thousands of Señor Sto. Niño devotees, revelers and spectators from all walks of life graced one of grandest event in the country and even in Asia.

With the theme: "One piece, one dance, one vision," contingents from Cebu and other parts of the country paid tribute once again to the miraculous image of the Holy Child Jesus, the Sto. Niño.

Held every third Sunday of January, the Sinulog is a dance ritual performed by Cebuanos as a thanksgiving offering to their patron saint.

Characterized by two steps forward and one step backward movements to the beat of the drums, the Sinulog is said to resemble the *sulog* (current) of what was then known as the Pahina River.

As it marked its 25th year anniversary, the festivity was grander compared to those of previous years. With more vibrant costumes and colorful presentations of at least 5,000 dancers, puppeteers and impressive floats, the celebration was a huge success.

Cebu City Vice Mayor Michael Rama, overall Sinulog chairman, noticed an increase of 30 percent in attendance compared to last year's one million.

The 4.5-km stretch of the carousel-type parade route from New Imus Street to General Maxilum Avenue, Fuente Osmeña rotunda, Osmeña Boulevard down to the Cebu City Sports Complex was packed with onlookers.

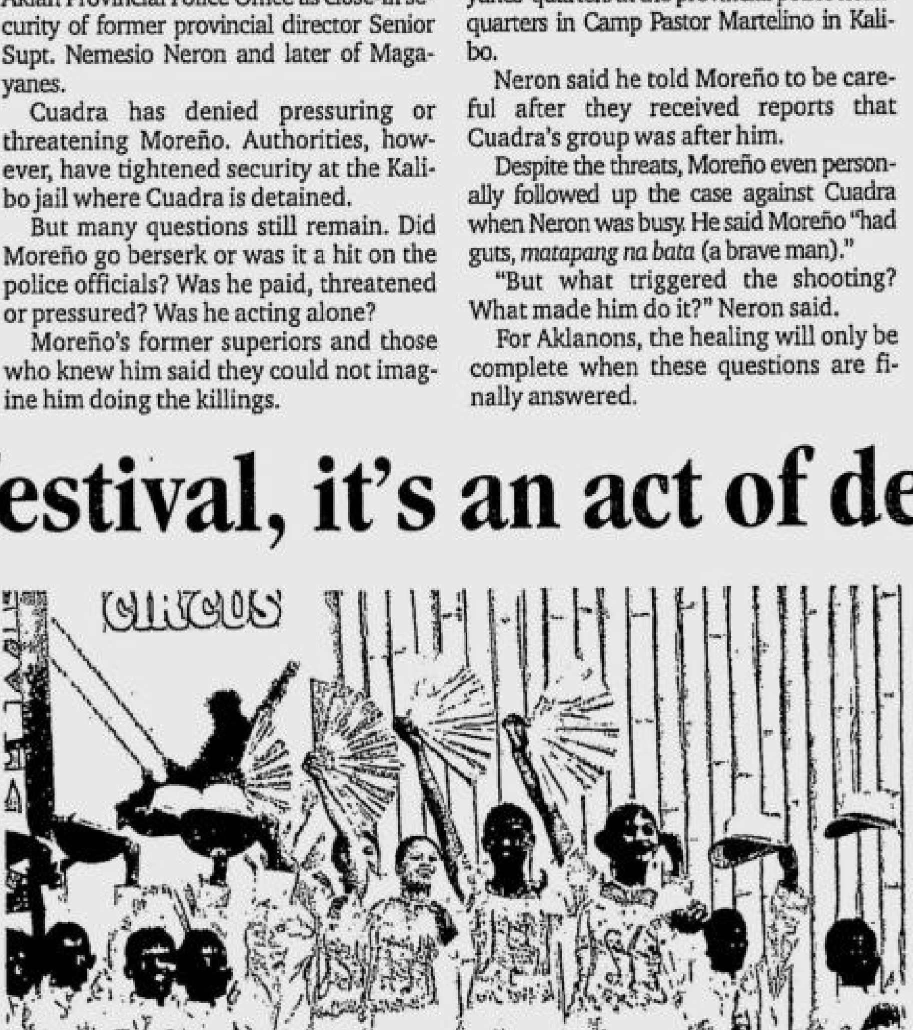
Tourism Secretary Ace Durano was impressed by the turnout of visitors—foreign and local tourists. He noted that Cebu ran out of rooms again to accommodate the visitors, a perennial problem during the Sinulog Festival.

Mother of all festivals

Durano, who labeled Sinulog as the mother of all festivals, vowed to address this problem and market Cebu as one of the prime tourist destinations in the country.

Secretary Cerge Remonde, who heads the government's media group, said the success of the event depicted the Cebuano's leadership and creativity in hosting a spectacular, world-class festivity.

At least 40 dancing contingents, each with 60 to 100 dancers, competed in the Sinulog-based and free interpretation categories. Contingents from Bohol, Negros Oriental, Leyte, Surigao City, Ozamiz, Camiguin, Surigao del Norte, Iligan City and Pampanga came to participate and showcase their own talents.



THE TRIBU Sinanduloy of Tangub City won first place in the street dancing competition of the Sinulog festival in Cebu City on Jan. 16. JUNJIE MENDOZA/CEBU DAILY NEWS

Tribu Sinanduloy of Tangub City bagged the first prize for the Sinulog-based category while the Lumad Basakhanon contingent from Basak, San Nicolas, Cebu City won the Free Interpretation category.

The Yagyag dancers of Sibulan, Negros Oriental, won the top prize for the street-dancing category.

Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal said there is much for the Cebuanos to be grateful to the Holy Child. The Sto. Niño continues to protect the people of Cebu from calamities, disasters and diseases, he said.

Msgr. Chris Garcia, chair of the Archdiocesan committee on worship, also lauded the successful holding of this year's festivity especially the fluvial parade held at the Mactan Channel on a Saturday.

Thousands of devotees converged along the shorelines while more than 100 small and big vessels joined the fluvial parade that began at 5 a.m. Thousands also waited along the wharf and ports of Mandaue and Cebu cities to get a glimpse of the galleon where the Holy Child and the Virgin of Guadalupe were boarded.

As had been the tradition, the images were first brought from the Basilica to the St. Joseph Parish in Mandaue City on Friday. On Saturday morning, they were taken from Mandaue City to be returned to the Basilica in time for the reenactment of the first baptism.

Yellow, red flaglets, white handkerchief and colorful flowers were dominant during the fluvial parade.

Devotees of the Sto. Niño came in droves from all over the world with the hope that their prayers, petitions and wishes would be granted.

George Martinez, 71, of Camotes Island off the northern tip of Cebu, has been a Sto. Niño devotee since 1949, after he survived an accident. Martinez almost lost his life when he fell in a bridge while on board his motorcycle. He believed the reason why he survived was because he called out to the Señor Sto. Niño as he was falling down.

"I only sustained a broken hip and that was all. I thought I would die because of the fall. The Sto. Niño saved me. For many years now, I never failed to come and honor him. I owe my life to Him," he said.

Big fire sweeps through Boracay

From page A1

was not clear what caused the blaze.

"It's so big! Please call for help. *Hindi namin kaya ito* (We cannot put this out)," PO1 Charlie Blanza of the Boracay Special Protection Unit (BSPU) told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview. The island-resort has only one fire truck.

Resort owners said hotels and beach bungalows were crammed with thousands of foreign tourists because of an influx of people diverted from tsunami-hit areas in Asia.

There were no immediate reports of injuries.

"The sky is glowing from the fire. I can see it from the beach," Joanne Lobo, a tourist said.

Blanza said they asked the Mactan Airbase in Cebu for helicopters to help put out the fire but it would take at least an hour for the helicopters to arrive.

He said the fire started at around 6:30 p.m. in one of the stalls of the flea market near Boat Station 3 in Barangay Manoc-Manoc, one of three villages of Boracay and near the southern end of the island nearest to the Aklan mainland.

As of 7:30 p.m., the fire had already reached the beachfront area, said Blanza. At least one resort and two dive shops near the market had also been razed, according to radio reports.

Firefighters doused the area starting from the Casa Pilar Resort around 50 meters from the market to prevent the fire from spreading towards Boat Station 2.

Panicky residents

"Our fire volunteers are already there to prevent the fire from spreading to other business establishments," said police officer Noli Gudapa.

He said a police team rushed to the scene to restore order as panicky residents and foreign and local tourists scampered to the beach to escape the fire. Some stall holders used pails of water from the sea to douse the flames.

Lara Salaver, president of the Boracay Foundation Inc. said the fire could not be contained because of the strong winds.

"*Naku, Diyos ko! Diyos ko! Lumalaki ang apoy* (My God, My God, the fire is getting bigger!)," she kept saying while she was being interviewed by the INQUIRER from her resort half a kilometer from the beachfront.

She said she heard two loud explosions. "I don't know what happened but it was so loud," she said.

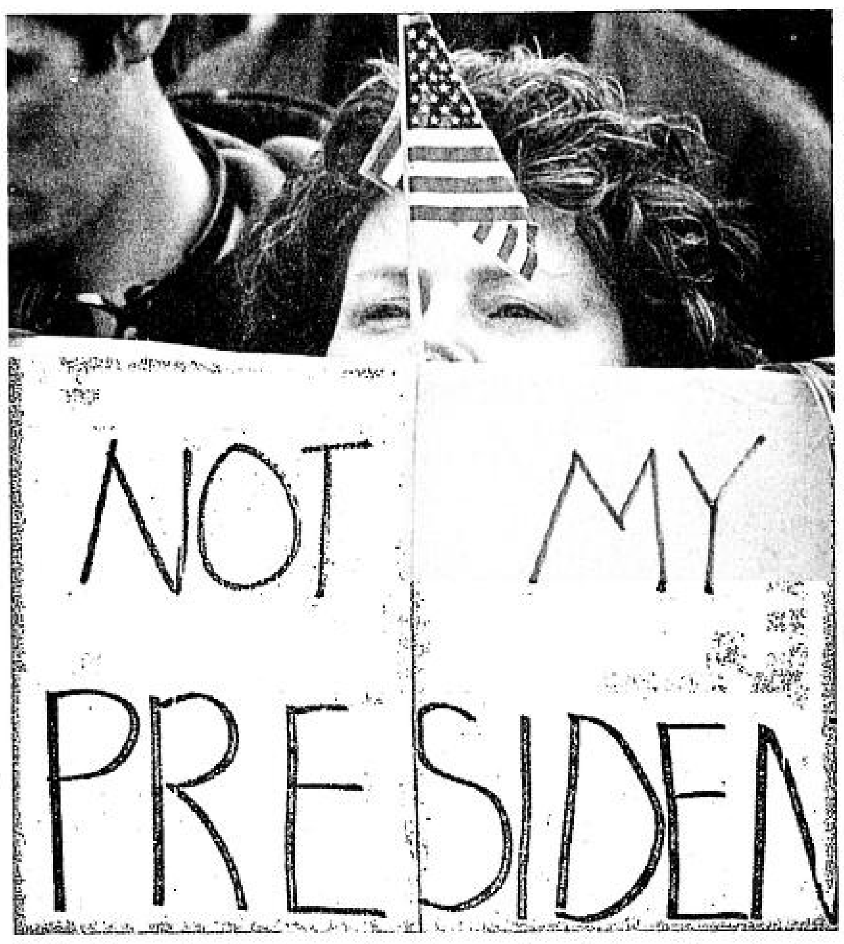
Salaver said restaurant and resort owners and their workers have started dousing the structures with water to prevent the fire from spreading.

There are around 150 stores in the flea market, known as the Talipapa. It is a popular destination for tourists for souvenirs, beachwear, eateries and grocery stores because the prices are cheaper compared to high-end stores on the island catering to foreign tourists. It is ringed by at least 15 popular resorts and restaurants.

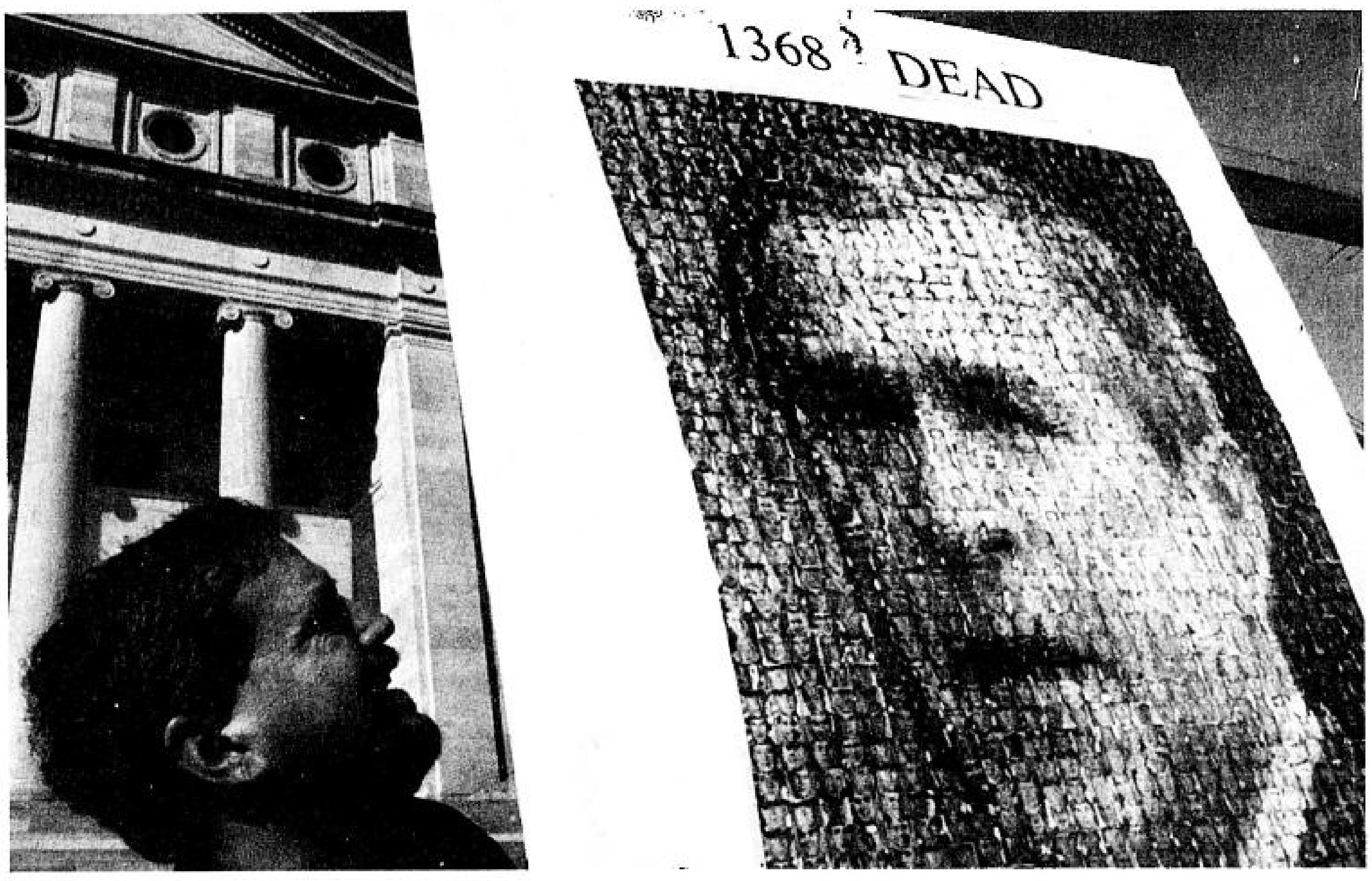
Boracay is normally packed with tourists at this time of the year. The peak season on the island started last month and many tourists are at present in Boracay because of the recently concluded Ati-Atihan festival.

Up to 5,000 square meters of property was on fire about an hour after the blaze started in a makeshift market area, radio station Bombo Radyo reported.

Radio reports said many tourists had fled to the beaches in panic to escape the flames. *With reports from Reuters and AP*



ONE of thousands of protesters along the parade route down Pennsylvania Avenue leading to the White House. AP



POSTER of Bush, a mosaic of photos of dead US soldiers, is placed by W.J. Monagle, a member of the Arkansas Coalition for Peace and Justice on the steps of the Arkansas state capitol in Little Rock to coincide with the inaugural rites in Washington, DC. AP

World jittery as Bush starts second term

From page A1

ultimately respect?

Bush did not spell out how far he'd go to spread democracy, or where he'd draw the line.

And not a word on Iraq. His address contained 2,000 words of passion and promise for his second term, but no direct mention of the war that could sink it.

The conflict in Iraq, win or lose, could define his presidency, analysts said. Bush knows this as well as anyone, which explains his strategic omission.

As he swore the oath for a second time, US casualty totals in Iraq stood at more than 1,360 dead and 10,500 wounded. The war already cost $100 billion, with a price tag running at more than $1 billion a week.

Bush asked for the public's patience, saying: "Our country has accepted obligations that are difficult to fulfill, and would be dishonorable to abandon."

That, along with a tribute to fallen troops, is the closest Bush got to mentioning Iraq.

Worst-case scenario

They do talk about worst-case scenarios in halls of the White House, but only in whispers.

"Unless we get Iraq straightened out, and quick, anything else we try is futile," said a senior White House aide who spoke on condition of anonymity.

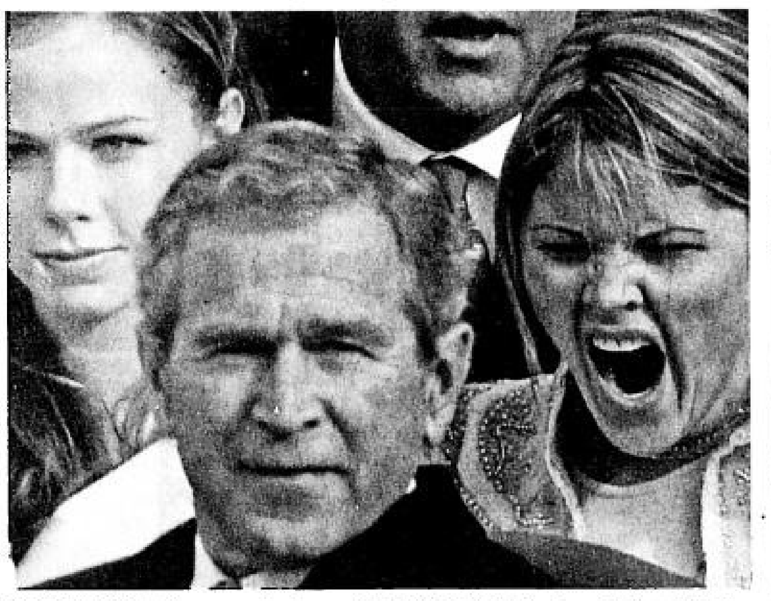
Presidential historian Thomas Cronin, president of Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington, described Bush's speech as "messianic in many ways."

Perilous position

"He plainly wants to play an internationalist role, saying we're going to fight on behalf of those who are fighting terrorism around the world. It was a proclamation of almost a crusade."

Bush begins a second term in a politically perilous position. His approval rating is about 50 percent, lower than any recent second-term president with the exception of Richard Nixon.

Iraq is the source of greatest concern. Six in 10 say the Iraqi elections this month will not stabilize the country, though just as many say it's a good first step.



HISTORY'S a big yawn to Jenna Bush (right) sitting beside her sister Barbara behind their father, the President at the inaugural stage on Capitol Hill. REUTERS

The war has become a personal tragedy in millions of American households. On the morning of Bush's inauguration, newspapers across the country carried reports of car bombings in Iraq.

Flag-draped coffins and jeering anti-war protesters competed with pomp and circumstance at Bush's inauguration along the snow-dusted, barricaded streets of central Washington.

As his motorcade made its way down Pennsylvania Avenue amid the tightest security in inaugural history, thousands of protesters along the parade route and nearby downtown streets booed, chanted slogans and carried placards condemning Bush's policies at home and abroad.

Arabic for Vietnam

Among the forest of protest signs, one read "Iraq is Arabic for Vietnam."

Protesters also traded insults with the more numerous, cheering Bush supporters, many of whom wore fur coats and paid for the best viewing spots.

At least one snowball hit Vice President Dick Cheney's limousine, and Bush's limousine sped up to get past the commotion.

One group of protesters carried hundreds of mock coffins to remind Americans of the mounting casualties in Iraq.

One of 13 people arrested was a man who embarrassed police four years ago by sneaking past security to get a handshake from Bush. He did not get a chance for another grip this inauguration.

Police sealed off 100 blocks around the White House and parade route, barring all traffic except official security and police cars.

Domestic agenda

Domestically, Bush is focusing the nation on an unusually ambitious second-term agenda. He wants to revamp Social Security, the tax code and the legal system while putting conservative judges on the bench and expanding his education initiatives.

"You didn't elect me to do small things," Bush said earlier this week. "I got four years and I'm going to use them."

How effectively he uses that time will likely depend upon, in a word, Iraq.

Around the world, there are pockets of support for Bush's foreign policy activism: preemptive strikes against perceived threats and the conviction that American muscle is a legitimate tool for spreading democracy.

Role of Condoleezza Rice

But the Iraq war has undermined his relationship with allies in Europe. And many in Britain are offended by his unilateralist approach—carried out with a perceived cowboy swagger, and compounded by an overt religiosity out of synch with Europe's secular politics.

Even one of Bush's staunchest allies, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, said he hoped the United States would promote consensus in the second term. "Evolution comes from experience," Blair said.

On the other hand, some commentators have suggested that second-term presidents can prefer world allies to domestic constituents, with an eye on a place in world history.

Some optimistically look to Condoleezza Rice as a secretary of state with intellectual and international credentials, with a respected deputy in Robert Zoellick.

Gentler US policy

In Brussels, European Union officials urged Washington to be more active on issues including the Middle East peace process, and to embrace the Kyoto treaty on global warming which Bush abandoned four years ago.

And Washington's contribution of funds and troops to help Asia recover from the tsunami disaster has raised hopes of a gentler dimension to US foreign policy.

"In recent weeks we have seen the humanitarian side of US foreign policy ... This is something we would like to see more of," said Indonesian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Marty Natelegawa.

Following Bush's refusal to rule out military action against Tehran over its nuclear program, Iranian President Mohammad Khatami played down the possibility of armed conflict.

"We think America is not in a position to take a lunatic action of attacking Iran," Khatami said in an interview with Iranian Radio.

Asian allies

US allies in Asia greeted Bush's inauguration with enthusiasm.

Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said he expected Bush to "continue to actively contribute to world peace and stability."

In Pakistan, chief government spokesperson Sheikh Rashid Ahmed hailed Bush and pledged Islamabad's continuing support of the war on terror.

Back to Cold War era?

But many Asians voiced concern that Bush's new administration would aggravate hostilities around the world.

"I got the feeling the US is turning the clock back toward the early Cold War era," said Yoshikazu Sakamoto, professor emeritus of international relations at Tokyo University.

"I think it's become clear that the US may take a multilateral approach toward its allies, but it will impose the American way toward non-allies." *AP, Reuters*

They could have danced all night, but didn't

WASHINGTON—Over and over, President George W. Bush and the first lady danced to a medley that included "I Could Have Danced All Night."

Could have, but didn't.

Bush shuttled through his 10-ball dance card at warp speed Thursday night and clocked in back at the White House by 10:03 p.m., nearly an hour and a half ahead of schedule.

Setting the tone for the evening, one White House aide flashed an index finger and proclaimed, "One down" as the presidential entourage left Ball No. 1.

The Bushes skipped dancing altogether at their first stop, and twirled all of 1 minute, 6 seconds at Stop 2. By Stop 5, they had it down to 52 seconds. Cumulative dance total for the night: 8 minutes, 54 seconds.

As Bush was tucking himself in for the night, the Creative Coalition, operating on Hollywood time, was just cranking up for one of the many unofficial parties around town.

Everybody wins

Actors Joe Pantoliano and Jonathan Lipnicki, the kid who stole scenes from Tom Cruise in "Jerry Maguire," were among those who turned out for the sold-out event. Singer Macy Gray was performing.

"We're celebrating everybody's win—Democrats and Republicans," said Pantoliano, co-president of the coalition, a nonpartisan advocacy group for actors, writers and other members of the entertainment industry.

Scratched from the coalition lineup: miffed actor Dennis Hopper, who had planned to co-chair the gala but decided to boycott Washington altogether after being mysteriously scrapped from participating in an official inaugural event.

A De la Renta gown

As Bush prepared for his first turn on the inaugural dance floor, he confessed, "It may be the first time in four years."

Laura Bush took her twirls in a silver-and-blue V-neck gown by Oscar de la Renta. Presidential twin daughters Jenna and Barbara hovered in the background only briefly in Badgley Mischkas.

The president met all his gala commitments, but stayed the longest at the military ball, spending only five minutes, coat in hand, at the other venues.

At each ball, Bush would open the festivities: "I'd like to ask the first lady for a dance," he would say before gingerly taking a few turns with his wife Laura.

Instants later, he would disappear behind the huge stars-and-stripes that served as curtain.

'Ready for next 4 years'

Vice President Dick Cheney also made the rounds of the inauguration balls, waving and greeting people. "A lot of you worked very hard to be here, and we welcome you to the first day of President Bush's second term.

He added: "We are ready for the work of the next four years. The president expects me to be in the office early tomorrow morning."

Bush wasn't the only inaugural reveler hightailing it home early. Dance-goers were pouring out of many of the balls by 10 p.m.

Around town, 50,000 people had gussied up for official balls draped in red-white-and-blue names like Freedom, Liberty, Democracy, Independence, Stars and Stripes.

Some revelers took the patriotic theme to extremes: One Betsy Ross-esque gown featured a glittering blue bodice with white stars and a poufy lower half swathed in wide stripes of red and white. A sparkling flag handbag completed the gaudy display. *AP, AFP*

'Great Dying' blamed on global warming

From page A1

tinctions were caused by global warming and oxygen deprivation over long periods of time.

Massive volcanic flows in what is now Siberia brought on the warming while, at the same time, geologic action caused global sea levels to drop, Ward explained in a telephone interview.

"Once you expose a huge amount of underwater sediment to the atmosphere, two very bad things happen—a huge amount of carbon in the sediments is released and also methane. Once (methane) hits the atmosphere it's the most efficient greenhouse gas on the planet," he said.

1-2 punch

That provided a one-two punch of warming and a decline in oxygen levels, he said.

"Some of us have been toying with the idea that dinosaurs evolved to be a low-oxygen adaptation," resulting from this era, Ward said. "We know birds can live at much lower oxygen concentrations than we do, and we think there were similar lung adaptations in dinosaurs."

Currently the atmosphere consists of about 21 percent oxygen, but the addition of gases at that time could have lowered levels to 16 percent or less, Ward said.

"If you didn't live on the sea level you didn't live," he commented, reflecting the fact that oxygen concentrations decline with altitude. The result would have been to eliminate half the living space on the planet, said Ward.

The more recent mass extinction that killed the dinosaurs—65 million years ago—has been linked to an impact by a large asteroid or comet that struck in an area off the coast of what is now Mexico and left a distinctive layer of dust worldwide.

Some researchers have argued that the Great Dying might also have resulted from such an impact, but Ward's team said it could find no evidence for such an event.

'No evidence of absence'

That doesn't mean there wasn't one, argues Luann Becker of the University of California at Santa Barbara, commenting that "the absence of evidence isn't evidence for absence."

Becker, who was not part of Ward's research team, said "they did a nice job of presenting the paleontological data and the stratigraphy, which seem to show some indication of an evolutionary change going on for a prolonged period of time." However, she added, she doesn't believe that addresses the subject of cause and effect.

"I think that this is an ongoing discussion," said Becker, who previously reported on a crater off the northwest coast of Australia that shows evidence of a large meteor impact at about the time of the early extinction.

Ward's research was funded by the Nasa Astrobiology Institute, the National Science Foundation and the National Research Foundation of South Africa. *AP*

EFFECTS of global warming on woodland is seen in the color of the trees near Watford, England, in this Nov. 12, 2004 photograph. AP

London sex . . .

From page A1

breaching advertising regulations, reports said on Friday.

According to the Sun newspaper, women he recruited were told to adopt fake accents so as to pretend to be Filipina, but some kept accidentally lapsing into local chatter.

Unusual investigation

"You thought you were talking to a Filipino girl and some had the accent just right," said one chatline user, who perhaps understandably did not want to be named.

"But when you heard the girl say Thanks me duck and Cheers me duck you knew it was a con."

"This has been an unusual investigation but we decided to proceed because so many men were being ripped off," a spokesperson for Nottingham's Trading Standards Office told the paper. *AFP*

Body . . .

From page A1

Pasig City General Hospital (PCGH) released the body of Zenaida Javier Echegaray to her daughter Encarnacion Alcuaz on the strength of a promissory note submitted by the latter.

Zenaida died on Jan. 19, 10 days after bursting a blood vessel because of severe high blood pressure. Alcuaz had been unable to immediately claim her body because of unpaid hospital bills.

But with the donations, Alcuaz is hopeful that she would be able to honor her promissory note and pay the P44,000 tab, as well as give her mother a decent wake and burial.

Modest amounts

"The donations started coming because of the story" that came out in the Jan. 21 issue of the INQUIRER, said Alcuaz, one of two daughters of Zenaida's from a relationship before she married child-rape convict Leo Echegaray.

She said the donations were in modest amounts of P1,000 or P2,000, and deposited by the donors in a bank account whose number she provided when they contacted her to indicate their intention to help.

"I'm very thankful," she said, adding that the initial donations received by her family would be used for the wake that would be held up to Jan. 25.

Cremation

Zenaida Echegaray became an outspoken crusader against the death penalty in the run-up to her husband's execution in February 1999—the first in the Philippines since capital punishment was reimposed.

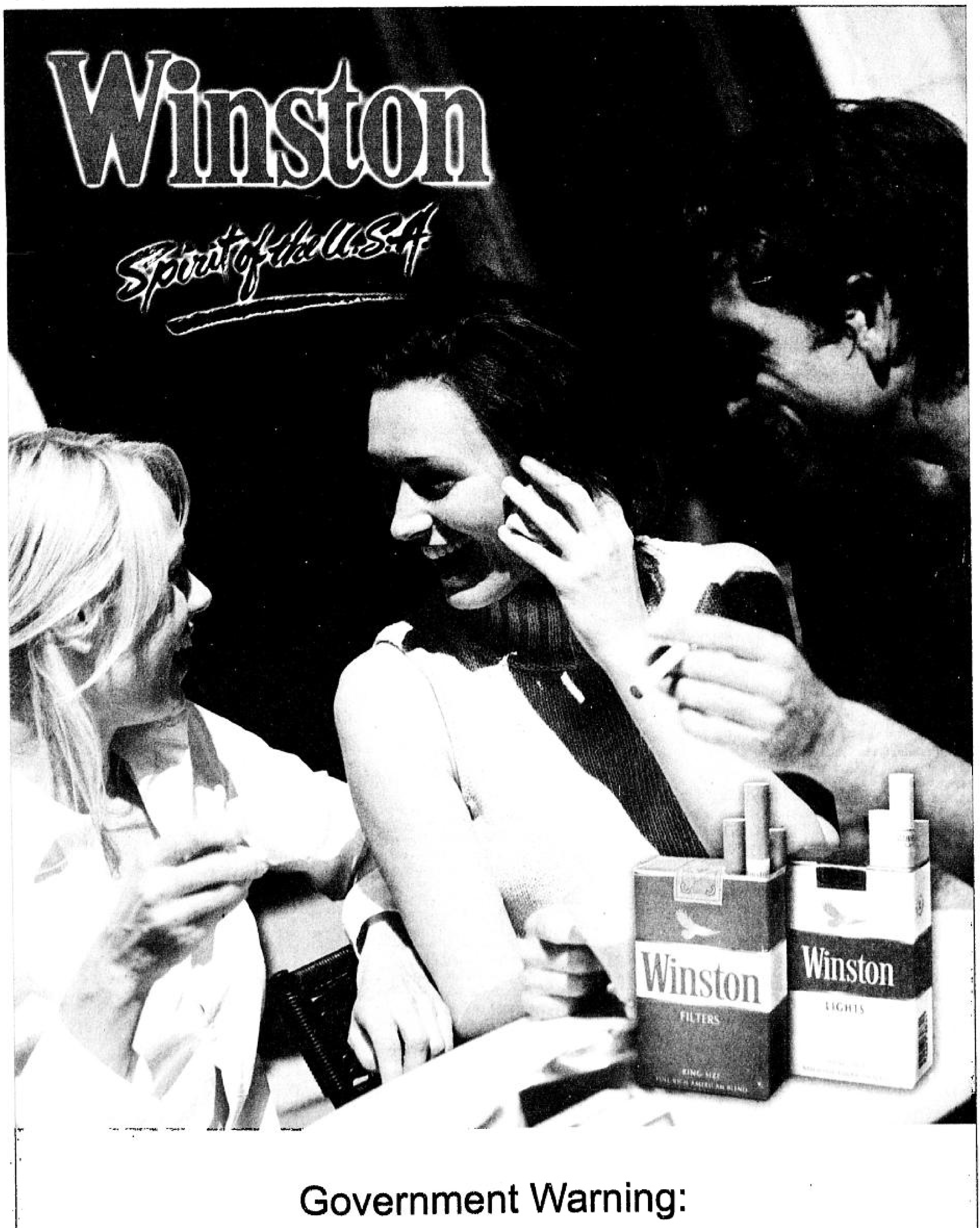
By accounts a dedicated mother, she tried to ensure that her two daughters would complete their studies, but she found it difficult to succeed even in her small attempts at business.

Alcuaz said she had yet to decide where her mother would be interred. She said her mother had wanted to be cremated.

"I told her I would follow her wish," the daughter said. "But I would like to have her buried first before I have her remains cremated, as well as those of her siblings who have passed away."

Alcuaz said she was told of the final hospital bill of P44,000 after she secured medicine and equipment from the Philippine General Hospital to replace the supplies used by the PCGH for her mother's surgery.

"I promised [the PCGH] we'd settle," she said.



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NBI ANTICRIME RAID

Top kidnap suspect nabbed in Quiapo

By Leila B. Salaverria

HE THOUGHT he could hide in Metro Manila but he was wrong.

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) arrested on Thursday Pangalian Pacalundo, the alleged leader of a kidnap-for-ransom group in Lanao del Sur, as he was reportedly hiding at the Islamic Center in Quiapo, Manila.

Pacalundo was arrested on the strength of a warrant issued by Marawi Judge Amer Ibrahim for the kidnapping of barangay chair Sulutan Saraya in Maguing, Lanao del Sur in 2003.

Saraya was reportedly released after paying P50,000 ransom.

Pacalundo also has an outstanding warrant for car theft.

The suspect's group began its kidnapping for ransom activities in Lanao del Sur, Iligan and nearby areas in 2002, said Ruel Lasala, head of the NBI's Reaction, Arrest and Interdiction Division (RAID) that made the arrest.

Lasala said the group usually targeted Maranao businessmen and government officials.

Because of the rash of abductions in Mindanao, the government launched an intensified operation against kidnappers on the island.

Apparently feeling the pressure, Pacalundo's group reportedly went into hiding, with some members including the alleged leader going to Metro Manila.

Lasala said the bureau was verifying information that the group had carried out a kidnapping in the National Capital Region where they were able to get a ransom of P1 million.

The NBI is also tracking down Pacalundo's alleged cohorts identified as Saidali Lopi, Mombao Pauntil, Ansari Panda, Mama Sapalo and Lininding Asher.

'Wet flag' scheme goes to SC

By Philip C. Tubeza

CALLING it "crude, barbaric and inhumane," a lawyer yesterday asked the Supreme Court to stop the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority's (MMDA) "wet flag" campaign.

In a 37-page petition, lawyer Ernesto Francisco said MMDA chair Bayani Fernando had no legal authority to implement the scheme and that it violated basic human rights and due process.

Denial of right

"The acts of hitting a pedestrian with a wet flag and wetting or drenching him or her with water in public is a denial of the constitutional right of a pedestrian to be protected from and not to be subjected to a cruel, degrading and inhumane punishment," Francisco said.

He added, "A pedestrian being hit with the wet flag and wet or drenched with water is actually being inflicted with a punishment in public which is humiliating, insulting, degrading, cruel and barbaric."

Francisco asked the court to issue a temporary restraining order against the campaign and to nullify it.

No law for scheme

He said there was no specific law or ordinance providing for the scheme since the Metro Manila Council, the MMDA's governing board and policymaking body, had not promulgated any ordinance allowing it.

"Worse, per verification made with the MMDA, there are no guidelines yet on how MMDA personnel are supposed to implement the 'Wet Flag' scheme," he said.

Francisco added that the MMDA's claim that MMDA ordinance No. 1 and MMDA Regulation No. 99-013—which deal with jaywalking—were the basis for the campaign does not hold water.

PLAYGROUND

A boy seems to have found a place to play—complete with playmates, though inanimate—at a park in the Makati Central Business District.

REM ZAMORA

Manila extends permits deadline

NOT EVEN the better ventilated and newly painted waiting area of the Manila Business Promotions and Development Office managed to entice clients to do business on time.

Thus, the City Council approved yesterday in a special session the extension of the period for new applications and the renewal of business permits up to Feb. 11. It should have ended on Jan. 20.

The extension gives business owners three weeks to avoid paying a 25-percent penalty for the first month of failing to renew on time and a two-percent surcharge for every month of further delay.

Despite the decision to extend the renewal period, no one at City Hall could say how many of the 50,000 expected renewals failed to make it to the original deadline. *Tarra V. Quismundo*

LLDA contractuals told to stay home

By Luige A. del Puerto

THE YEAR has just started, and already, some government contractual employees may find themselves jobless at the end of the month.

Edgardo Manda, new chair of the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA), has issued a memorandum telling some contractuals that they need not go to work by Jan. 31.

"Effective January 31, all contractual employees whose contracts have expired shall, in the meantime, not be required to report for work."

Manda said about 60 contractual employees would be affected by the memorandum.

However, the more than 100 LLDA contractuals, even those whose contracts have just been renewed, were anxious.

During the first week of January, Casimiro Ynares III, whom Manda replaced, renewed the contracts of the contractuals.

Ynares said technically, the contracts he extended should be honored.

However, in Manda's memorandum, he also ordered a review of all employment contracts.

The LLDA is the regulatory body of the Laguna Lake.

Solon fights 'janitor' over Pasig

THE JANITOR—the fish variety, that is—has no place in the Pasig River.

The thick-skinned, spike-finned janitor has become a pest, preventing the growth and multiplication of edible fish species in the river, said Mandaluyong Rep. Benhur Abalos.

"These pests are eating the fingerlings in the Pasig River," said Abalos in a phone interview.

On Jan. 16, Abalos launched the Clean Up Ilog Pasig project aimed at rehabilitating the river by limiting, if not eliminating, the number of janitor fish in the waterway but also cleaning it up.

A major goal of the project, which is one of the three major components of the national environmental campaign of Clean Up the Philippines Movement (CUPM), is to make the Pasig a source of edible fish and other water resources.

The launching of the project coincided with the 3rd Benhur Abalos Fishing Competition organized by the Mandaluyong Fishing Club.

In the fishing competition, Abalos said, 75 participants were tasked not only to collect garbage from the Pasig River but also to catch as many janitor fish as they could.

The average size of a janitor fish in the Pasig River is one foot, according to Abalos.

"I was surprised to see an increase in the volume of janitor fish in the river and I think it went up by 100 percent since last year," he said.

This, he said, was causing an ecological imbalance in the river.

After the competition, Abalos released about 6,000 fingerlings into the river to replenish edible fish varieties in the river.

Janitor fish, an exotic fish species, was brought to the country by aquarium hobbyists to help maintain clean fish tanks.

According to the Laguna Lake Development Authority website, janitor fish were "believed" released into the Laguna Lake in 1995 when typhoon "Rosing" overflowed aquatic holding pens along the shoreline.

Its population rapidly grew within the lake then spread to its rivers and tributaries. *Belle V. Bondoc*

MMDA execs want SWT back

CITING the success of the Staggered Working Time scheme, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) has recommended its reimplementation in February.

MMDA General Manager Robert Nacianceno said that when the scheme was implemented from Dec. 15 to Jan. 6, travel speed on the northbound lane of Edsa went up from 27 kph to 32 kph between 7 a.m. to 9 a.m.

During the same time, travel on the southbound lane was faster from 16 kph to 32 kph.

"Similarly, travel speed between 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. increased also. For the northbound lane, from 18 kph to 22 kph, while on the southbound lane, from 15 kph to 25 kph," the MMDA official added.

Nacianceno said the Tripartite Industrial Peace Council fully support the reimplementation of the scheme which separates the work schedules of private and public employees. *Margaux C. Ortiz*

Jinggoy, stop acting like a spoiled brat!

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

JUST because the much-pressured Director General Edgar Aglipay, Philippine National Police chief, raised his voice on him, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada now wants him kicked out?

Aglipay publicly apologized to the honorable and distinguished senator, son of disgraced President Erap and Sen. Loi Ejercito, but Mr. Jinggoy did not accept his apology.

He still wants Aglipay to resign from his position, another way of saying, "I want him kicked out because he humiliated me."

But did Aglipay humiliate the senator in public? No, he didn't.

Aglipay just turned down the senator's request that other members of the Estrada family, as well as friends, be allowed to enter ex-President Erap's resthouse which serves as his detention cell.

The request was made over the cellular phone. Senator Jinggoy called Aglipay on his cellular phone from Hong Kong when his father was about to board the plane for Manila.

Aglipay at the time was apparently pressured and tired with the preparations for the former President's return to the country.

There was talk of destabilization and of a plot to have Erap assassinated. So, the pressure on the PNP chief was understandable.

What Aglipay remembered telling Jinggoy was that, "*Puwede ho, bukas na, gabi na kasi* (Can I do it tomorrow because it's already late), and I have to talk first to my ground commander."

So, what's wrong with that statement? If the soft-spoken Aglipay said it in a tone a notch higher than usual, Jinggoy should understand that he was under tremendous pressure.

There was nothing in that statement to show that he was disrespectful toward a senator of the republic.

C'mon, Jinggoy, stop acting like a spoiled brat! You're no longer a nursery kid, with milk spilling from his mouth, who always wants to have his way, although truthfully, you look it. Minus the mustache, I've seen that kind of face in a shelter for abandoned children in Alabang.

***

It's surprising opposition senators met in a caucus to discuss Senator Jinggoy's temper tantrum against Aglipay.

And to think that the meeting was attended by Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel and the respected Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile!

Of course, it's understandable that Jinggoy's doting mother, Senator Loi, should be there. But Pimentel and Enrile?

Imagine, the opposition bloc in the Senate tackling a non-issue like Aglipay raising his voice on a senator that was not even done in public!

Claro M. Recto, Lorenzo Tañada, Benigno Aquino, Camilo Osias, Jose W. Diokno and other Senate luminaries who have passed away are probably turning in their graves.

Jinggoy's tantrum reminds me of that joke about the simpleton who went to the cockpit bringing along a duck to take part in the cockfights.

So, how could you tell there were other simpletons inside that cockfight arena?

Answer: The ones who bet on the duck.

METROBRIEFS

Pag-Asa ablaze

FIRE swept through a residential area in Barangay Pag-Asa, Quezon City, yesterday afternoon, razing at least six houses. It began at 2:23 a.m. on the terrace of a two-story house at 41-E Road 13. Three children were inside the house when the fire broke out. Their guardian had reportedly left for a nearby mall. No one was hurt in the incident. ***Edson C. Tandoc Jr.***

Pot session arson

THIRTY-THREE-YEAR-OLD Joselito Manga, who occupied the room where a killer fire in Pasay City started, said it could have been set by drug addicts. Manga, of 2434 Decena St., Pasay City, has been arrested and faces charges for the death of three children aged 3, 5 and 11, who were burned to death in that incident. Manga said he had his room rented out for P20 to a group of drug users who used it for a pot session. ***Nancy C. Carvajal***

Better water service

THE MANILA Water Company has allotted P500 million for the improvement this year of water supply distribution in Mandaluyong and parts of San Juan. Plans include the replacement of all old pipes and the rehabilitation of defective lines with "leaks" to improve the water distribution system. A Manila Water team is currently upgrading the water supply distribution along major roads like Shaw Boulevard, Kalentong and Martinez Streets in Mandaluyong.

Northrail woes

A GROUP of residents affected by the North Rail Project staged a rally yesterday to protest allegedly inadequate support for some 100 families already relocated to the Towerville site in San Jose del Monte City in Bulacan. Community leader Clarita Eneria said many of those relocated from Malabon City were living out in the open. After the rally, the National Housing Authority promised to buy more tents for the relocated families. ***Edson C. Tandoc Jr.***

AHS Class '55 meet

SUPREME Court Associate Justice Cancio Garcia has been named "most outstanding alumnus" of Arellano High School's Class '55 which holds its Golden Jubilee on Sunday with a dinner-dance at the Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel. Garcia will be honored along with Deputy Lord Mayor Arturo T. Viola and Dr. Rodolfo Ibañez. The reunion will start with a Mass at 4:30 p.m. For details, call Ray Pilar at 801-7705, Pining Cristobal Fajardo at 419-1058, Percy Salazar at 0918-9017147, Jaime Ladao at 897-4020, Dolly Legaspi-Lim at 0917-5351135 and Gus B. Villanueva at 527-8421.

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Jan. 22	Kasadyahan Parade Competition	Freedom Grandstand
Jan. 23	Ati-Atihan Parade Competition	Freedom Grandstand

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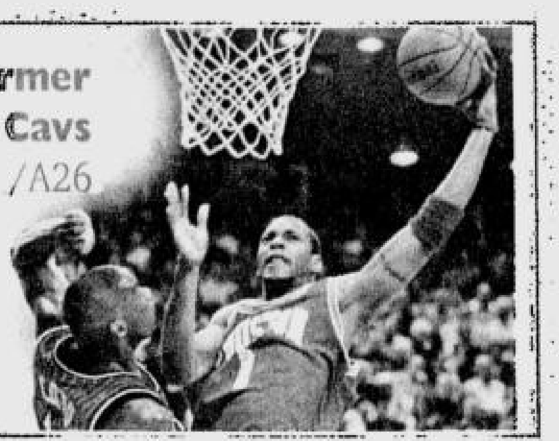
WHAT'S INSIDE

■ Red-hot Agojo tops Faldo Series in HK /A23

■ Brookline overrated in Lehman's terms/A24

■ Safin turns pain into gain; Federer, Williams advance /A25

■ T-Mac burns former team; Kings slay Cavs /A26



SEA Games sites ready for scrutiny in 2 months

By Marc Anthony Reyes

BY MARCH, the Philippines would be ready to invite members of the Southeast Asian Games Federation Council for an ocular inspection of all the facilities to be used in the Nov. 27 to Dec. 5 Games.

Philippine SEAG Organizing Committee secretary general Steve Hontiveros yesterday said they will invite representatives of 10 other members of the federation to evaluate the country's preparation for the Games, which will be held here only for the third time.

HONTIVEROS

Hontiveros said the facilities are all ready, save for some repairs, and that there's no need to fret over their completion because "there won't be any big construction anymore."

The inspection will cover all venues from Metro Manila, Subic, Cebu City and Bacolod City.

He also announced several changes in the venues like the mountain bike events, which will be held in Danao City after Mayor Ramon Durano III officially accepted the hosting, including all the expenses the events would incur.

"We are happy with Mayor Durano's acceptance, this goes to show the willingness of everybody from private corporations to local governments to pool their resources for the success of the SEA Games," said Hontiveros.

Bailiwick

Wushu, one of the country's bailiwick in terms of gold medal chances, will be staged at the Folk Arts Theater, which is a bigger venue compared to the former venue GSIS auditorium.

Men's football will be held at the Panaad Sports Complex and Paglaum Sports Complex, instead of the La Salle-Bacolod fields, according to Hontiveros.

He added that aquatics—which include swimming, water polo and diving—will be at the Los Baños facilities owned by Trace Computer College, while arnis will be competed at the Casino Filipino.

Trace Computer College, according to Hontiveros, will also be the official provider of information technology of the Games, including its web site, which is set to be launched next month.

Earlier, ladies' football was transferred to Marikina instead of Philsports in Pasig with the city government shouldering the cost.

Hontiveros also asked the national sports associations to submit their requirement for equipment to hasten their purchase and avoid cramming in the coming months especially since some of them will be ordered from abroad.

SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

TENNIS: 2005 Australian Open Third Round; 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (r-8 p.m.); Day 6 Highlights; 10 p.m.: STAR Sports—The third round continues down under.

BASKETBALL: NBA—Suns vs Spurs; 10 a.m. (r-9 p.m.); Solar Sports; Nuggets vs Grizzlies; 11:30 a.m. (r-9 p.m.); ESPN—Phoenix and San Antonio tangle once more even as Denver takes on Memphis.

US NCAA—Kansas vs Villanova; tomorrow at 1 a.m.; Northwestern vs Penn State; tomorrow at 5 a.m.; ESPN—The highly-touted Jayhawks clash with the Wildcats while the other Wildcats battle the Nittany Lions.

FOOTBALL: EPL; 10:45 p.m.; STAR Sports—League-leading Chelsea faces off against Portsmouth.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

PBL SEMIFINALS

Magnolia vs Welcoat today

MAGNOLIA-FEU'S poor start in the PBL Open Championship apparently served its purpose.

The Wizards' early three-game slide seems like a distant memory now, but the experience clearly sharpened their focus for a back-to-back title.

And the Wizards look solidly on track when they shoot for their tenth straight win against Welcoat Paints in Game 1 of the semifinals at 4 p.m. today at the UST Gym.

"We're in the right direction because I put more emphasis on the right attitude," said Wizards coach Koy Banal.

Montaña Pawnshop tackles Granny Goose in the other best-of-three series at 2 p.m.

"For sure, it's going to be a tough game," predicted Banal. "Welcoat is a strong team with an able coaching staff."

Undoubtedly, coach Caloy Garcia is hoping that Banal is right.

"We have to work harder this time around to get back at them," said Garcia, whose Welcoat lost to Magnolia-FEU in the finals last year. "*Kailangan makauna kami.* (We have to take the initiative).

Among the anticipated highlights will be the matchups of the league's best big men.

Reigning Most Valuable Player Arwind Santos of Magnolia-FEU will be pitted against Welcoat rookie Anthony Washington, who recently delivered 31 points and 15 rebounds.

GAMES TODAY
(*UST Gym*)
(Game 1 of best-of-three semifinals)
2 p.m.—Granny Goose vs Montaña
4 p.m.—Welcoat vs Magnolia-FEU

Similarly, Jon Dan Salvador of Montaña will face Granny Goose rookie JR Quiñahan, the league's top block shot artist (2.5 bpg).

"It's going to be a tall order for us but we are ready to face the challenge," said Tortillos coach Jun Tan.

Magnolia-FEU and Montaña are clear favorites, but if the elimination games are any indication, it's still a tough call.

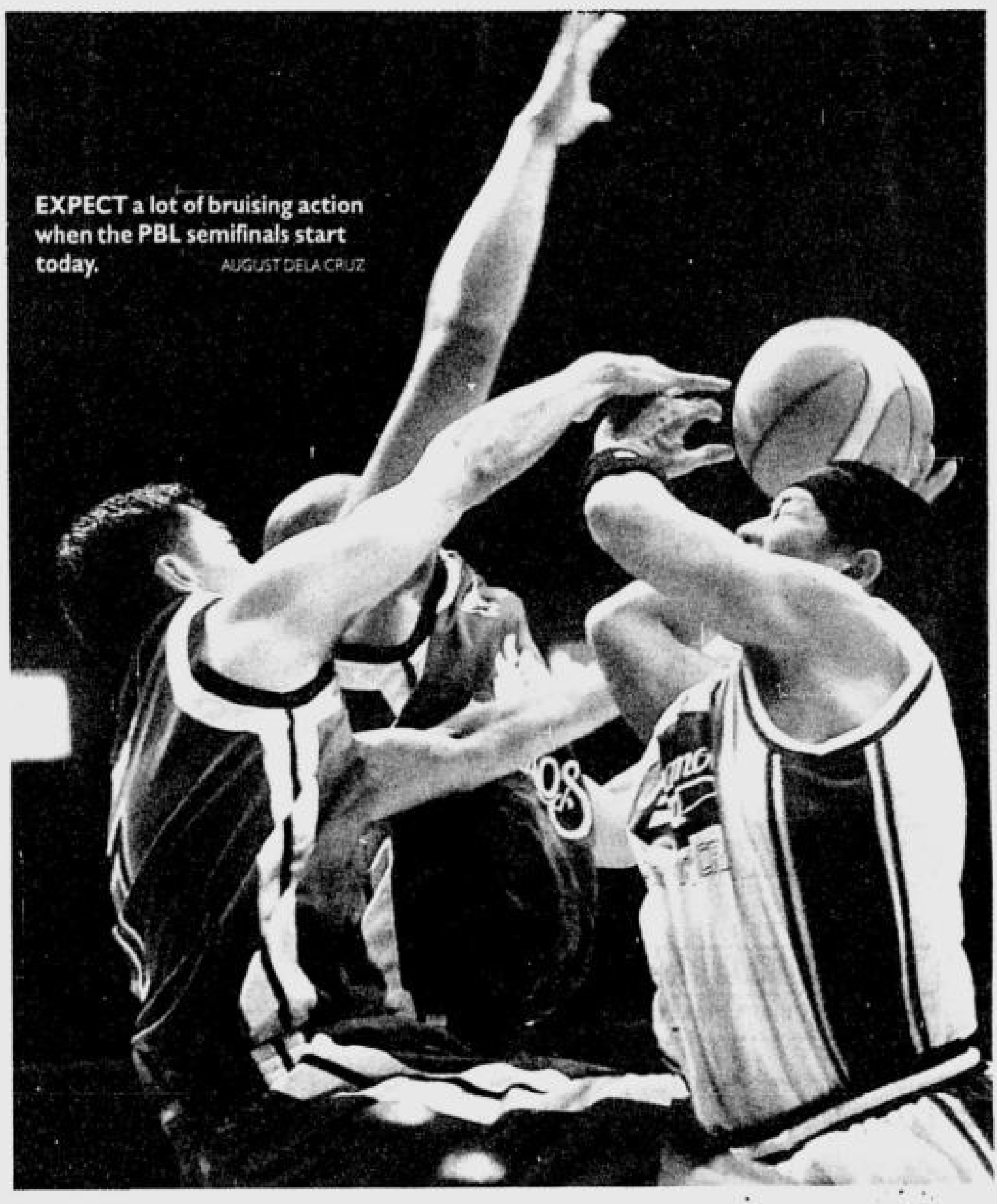
The Wizards and the Paintmasters split their two encounters. In the first round, Marvin Ortiguerra's buzzer-beater lifted Welcoat, 80-79, in double overtime. The Wizards got back, 56-44, in their second meeting.

Montaña and Granny Goose also had an even tally. The Tortillos pulled a 79-72 victory in the first round, which the Jewels avenged with a 74-63 triumph.

Magnolia-FEU and Montaña, however, enjoyed a weeklong break after securing outright slots in the semifinals.

Granny Goose claimed the third semifinal seat after clobbering AMP-Ateneo, 76-52, in the playoffs. Welcoat completed the Final Four cast after routing foe ICTSI-La Salle, 90-60.

Jasmine W. Payo



EXPECT a lot of bruising action when the PBL semifinals start today. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

PSC celebrates 15th anniversary Monday

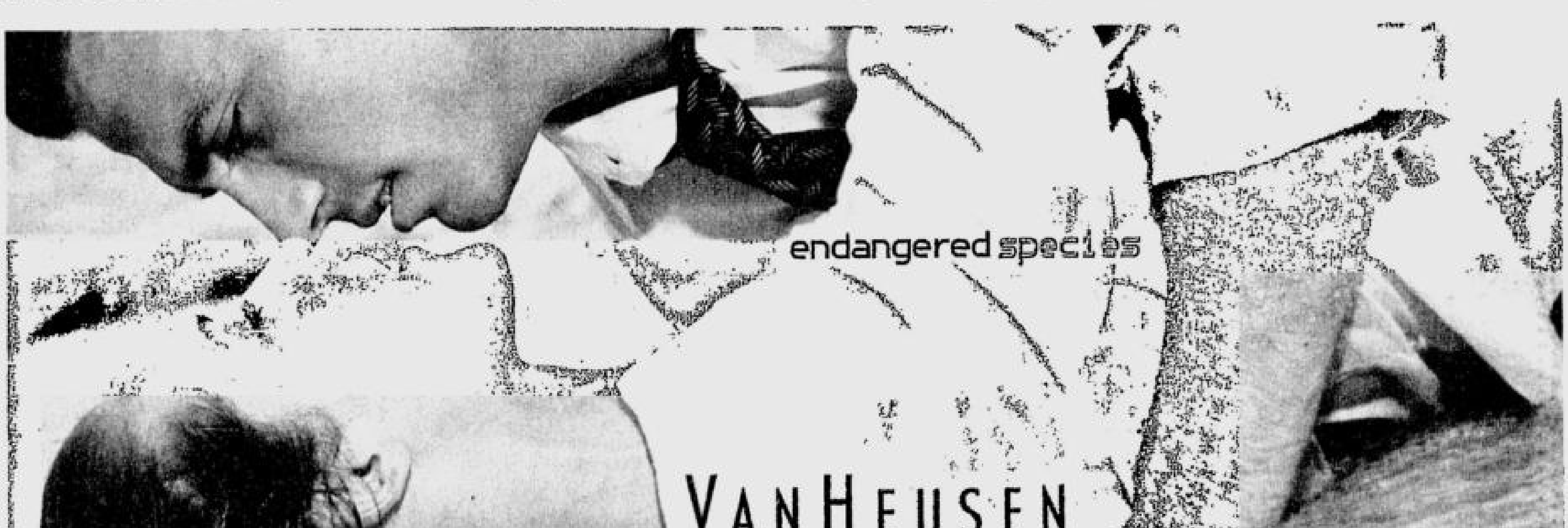
PHILIPPINE Sports Commission Officer-in-Charge William "Butch" Ramirez announced yesterday that preparations are in full swing for the holding of the 15th year anniversary celebration of the government sports agency on Monday at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

With the theme "Strength in Unity: Milestone for Sports Excellence," Ramirez said the event will also serve as a thanksgiving and recognition day. First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and former PSC chairmen Cecil Hechanova, Perry Mequi, Mel Lopez, Philip Juico, Carlos Tuason, and Eric Buhain have been invited to grace the celebration.

Joining them are PSC commissioners Leon Montemayor, Ambrosio de Luna and Michael Barredo and top sports officials led by Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr., heads of national sports associations, and Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid and Rep. Renato Unico Jr. of the Senate and House youth and sports committees, respectively.

"This event is envisioned to symbolize harmony in the local sporting community and to commemorate our milestone year of unity and camaraderie in the PSC," said Ramirez.

Registration starts at 7 a.m. and the Eucharistic Celebration at 7:45 a.m. while the flag raising ceremony starts at 9 a.m. to kick off the whole day affair with fun games for PSC employees in the afternoon.



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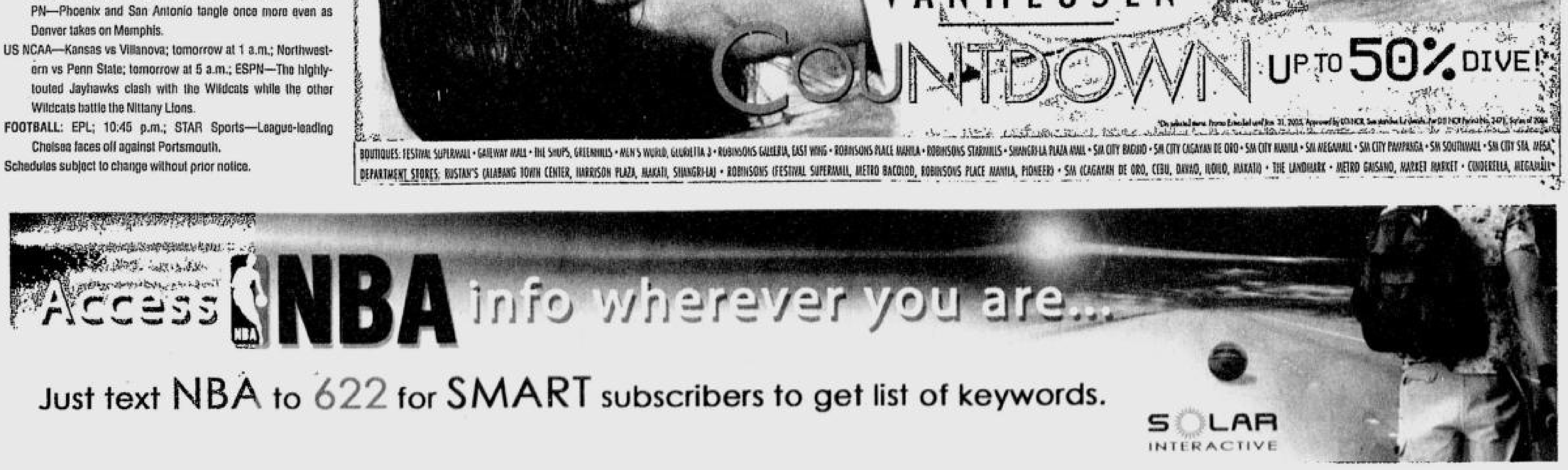

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SOLAR INTERACTIVE

Sinulog Invt'l pits RP team vs China, Korea, URBL fives

GAMES TOMORROW
(*Cebu City Coliseum*)
1:30 p.m.—Opening ceremony
2 p.m.—M. Lhuillier vs South Korea
4 p.m.—Quezon vs North Cotabato
6 p.m.—RP Team vs China

CEBU CITY—The Philippine team will be competing against top squads from China, South Korea and the United Regional Basketball League in the 2005 Mayor Tomas Osmeña Sinulog International Invitational Cup kicking off tomorrow at the New Cebu City Coliseum.

Joining the RP-Cebuana Lhuillier team of Coach Dong Vergeire and Boysie Zamar are the Chinese Basketball Association and South Korean Collegiate All-Stars and the URBL's M. Lhuillier and Quezon Huskers. Completing the roster is prospective URBL member North Cotabato Braves owned by North Cotabato Gov. Manny Piñol and mentored by Jesus Ramon Pido.

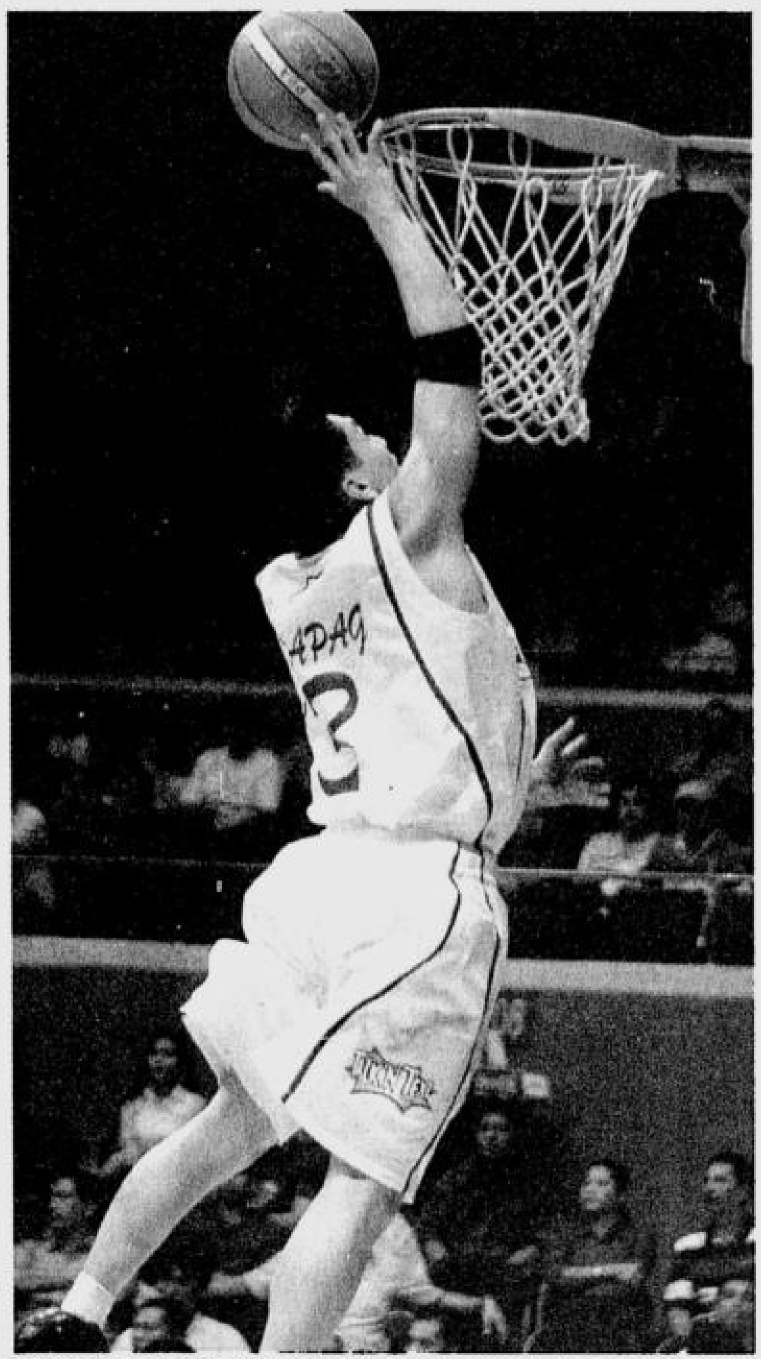
The event is organized by the URBL in cooperation with the Basketball Association of the Philippines and the Cebu City Government as part of the festivities for the silver anniversary of the annual Sinulog celebration.

"We also want to use this tournament to promote Cebu not just as a tourist destination but also as a sports haven to attract local and foreign investors," said Cebu City South District Councilor Raul "Yayoy" D. Alcoseba, who doubles as the head coach of the Jewelers.

M. Lhuillier emerged as the very first champion of the URBL, besting the Ilocos Sur Snipers, 3-1, in the best-of-five championship series that ended last Dec. 16.

The Quezon Huskers will be parading an all-star lineup with reinforcements from other teams led by Ilocos Sur assistant coach Jeffrey Flowers.

Flowers will be joining his Ilocos Sur wards Mike Manigo, Jeff Sanders, Harold Santa Cruz and Richard Hardin along with Harbour Centre-Pampanga stalwarts Billy Bansil, Alex Bognot and Jay Sierra.



JIMMY Alapag, 5-foot-7, soars for a breakaway dunk against Shell at Araneta Coliseum. VAL HANDUMON

TNT blanks Shell in OT

By June Navarro

MINUS its top scoring option, Talk 'N Text went to work on defense, emptying Shell's gasoline tanks in overtime for a huge 92-84 victory last night in the semifinals of the Gran Matador PBA Philippine Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Phone Pals, orphaned by an injured Willie Miller from the third quarter onwards, left Shell with the dubious distinction of being the first team to go scoreless in overtime on the way to a commanding 2-0 lead in the race-to-three affair.

"Our job is not yet done," said Mark Telan after the Phone Pals moved a game from entering the finals for the first time since capturing the 2003 All-Filipino Cup.

Eric Menk posted his 31st career double-double as Barangay Ginebra survived Danny Seigle's career-high 39 points to beat San Miguel Beer, 100-92, in the second game.

Menk finished with 24 points and 12 rebounds for the Kings, who evened their best-of-five series with the Beermen at 1-1.

Telan was one of three people who made up for the absence when Miller went out in the third quarter after scoring on a drive, fetching a foul and landing awkwardly on his left foot.

GAMES TOMORROW
(*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:10 p.m.—Talk 'N Text vs Shell
6:30 p.m.—San Miguel Beer vs Barangay Ginebra

Vic Pablo sent the game into overtime, knocking a jumper with three seconds left in regulation. Jimmy Alapag completed a four-point play for a 76-74 Phone Pals lead.

But it was defense that won it out for Talk 'N Text as the Phone Pals pared Shell's attempts to just five in overtime and forced the Turbo Chargers to miss all of them.

The scores:

First Game

TALK 'N TEXT 92—Alapag 17, Telan 14, Pablo 12, Belano 11, Salangsang 9, Miller 9, Fran 7, Gelig 5, De Ocampo 5, Camaso 3, Ravena 0.

SHELL 84—Ferreria 23, Yap 19, Dela Cruz 18, Calagulo 7, Jackson 7, Alvarez 5, Mamaril 5, Sotto 0, Cruz 0, Sta. Maria 0, Tubid 0, Bajar 0.

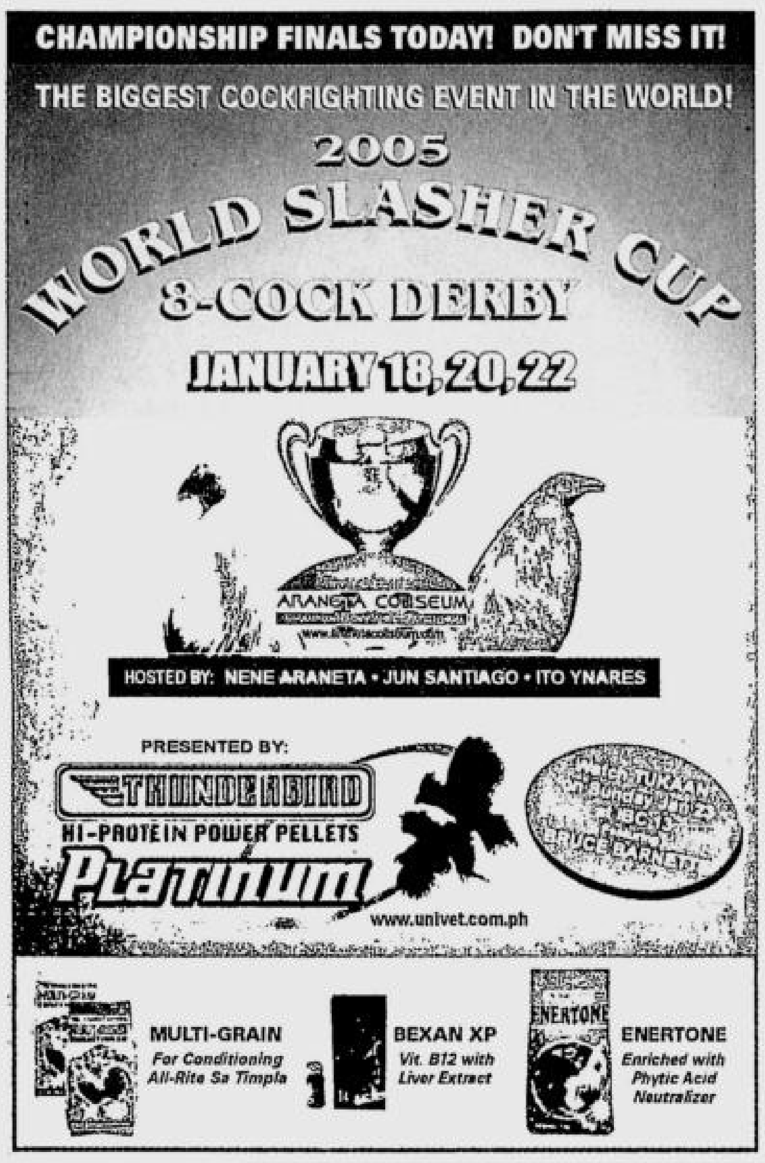
Quarters: 18-25, 39-41, 67-62, 84-84, 92-84.

Second Game

GINEBRA 100—Menk 24, Caguioa 21, Helterbrand 14, Santos 12, Seigle 11, Salvacion 8, Adducul 6, Dimaunahan 2, Noble 2.

SAN MIGUEL 92—Seigle 39, Belasco 16, Racela 10, Villoria 8, Peña 8, Ildefonso 7, Singson 2, Hontiveros 2.

Quarters: 25-18, 44-47, 75-73, 100-92.



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Luisito's civil action stuck in oblivion

By Percy D. Della
Correspondent

SACRAMENTO—Luisito Espinosa's court fight to collect his unpaid purse of $150,000 started as a straightforward civil action.

Now it has taken on the elements of a John Grisham legal drama.

Hermie Rivera, former handler and surrogate father to the ex-world boxing champ lays out the twists and turns.

The original judge, who sat on the case for two years, retires. A new judge takes over and promptly calls in sick on several scheduled hearings.

Meanwhile, an ex-provincial governor, a boxing manager married to a jurist on the land's Supreme Court and a ring matchmaker stand their ground.

Payment of Luisito's reward, which he earned eight years earlier for the successful defense of his then WBC featherweight crown, seems farthest from their mind.

Wait, the plot thickens.

Rivera said the case he describes as "sleeping the sleep of the dead" should have been tried starting in November last year, after several postponements. "But the court with a new judge now has to inventory cases, interminably taking a huge chuck of trial time," laments Rivera.

The case has reportedly been penciled for hearing by the court on either Feb. 8 or March 8. Although Rivera has not confirmed the dates, he is wary of another delay.

"Poor Louie, when will this madness end?" asked Rivera, who's currently in the Bay Area visiting family and friends. "Luisito's most fervent desire is for the judge to decide his case with finality."

In his prime Espinosa walked all over his challengers for his featherweight and bantamweight world crowns.

Today, he is a mere stepping stone for upstarts on their way to ring glory.

Espinosa will be forced to fight again on Feb. 18 to keep his chances alive for the elusive green card.

For sympathizers, it will be gut wrenching to watch the 37-year-old former world champ face 24-year-old Mexican Martin Honorio in Stockton.

The last time Luisito fought a youngster, he was beaten silly by Carlos Navarro in a 10-rounder in Reno last summer. Mexican Navarro was seven years old when Espinosa debuted in the ring in 1984 and was 13 when his opponent won the first of two titles in 1989.

For that ignominy, Espinosa received $4,000—chomp change that current Filipino boxing sensation Manny Pacquiao can earn in milliseconds in this day and age of million-dollar purses.

Louie faces uncertainty each time he climbs into the ring. To remain with his family in Pacifica near San Francisco, he has to keep on fighting because he holds a visa for special skills.

Rivera said Luisito has visions of coming home and making some use of his boxing life.

If he gets the money due him, Luisito plans to invest in a gym to show young boys how to box and perhaps re-fight his past matches of his glory years, according to Rivera.

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HITACHI CAGING: Hitachi Philippines president Leo Shieh does the ceremonial toss during the game between St. Stephen's High School and Xavier School kicking off the 29th Hitachi-Metro Manila Tiong Lian Basketball League at the Chiang Kai Shek Gym.

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SPORTSWATCH

World Slasher on

A WIDE-OPEN race for the coveted title looms when the prestigious 2005 World Slasher Cup 8-Cock Derby gets going today at the 17,000-seater Araneta Coliseum featuring 120 fights. Derby starts at noon. Defending champions Rudy Salud, Lito Orillaza and Makati Vice Mayor Nestor Merado (winning Jobo PS), who topped the WSC first leg last year with a perfect score of eight points, remained unbeaten with four wins after two days of action. "Our team is definitely gunning for a back-to-back title, but it won't be easy," said Salud. Also with four victories going into today's 4-cock finals are Pampanga's team of Jet Fernando and Rudy Jingco (Jimafer Jvlet PBRJI), Boy de Roca and Pepito Ngo (BL Fatman March 7, 9 and 11 Pasay), Mike Romulo (Kalookan Queen). With 3.5 points are the favorites: 2004 Sunset Cocker of the Year Joe Wolcott and Jun Santiago (Complexor 3000 Firefly 14) and Boy Marso (BM Bulalayaw RB II). The champion/s will receive an elegant silver cup and the hefty cash prize at stake in tomorrow's awards night/dinner at Gateway Cineplex Reception Lobby. For inquiries, contact 911-3101 and 911-2928.

5-cock derby elims

THE THIRD round of eliminations of Pamigay Premyo 5-Cock Derby, dangling a guaranteed prize of P1 million, gets underway today at the fully air-conditioned Las Piñas Coliseum with Sagupaan Complexor 3000 as sponsor. This derby series is being hosted by former Mayor Nene Aguilar and has attracted a total of 157 entries so far. The championship round is on Jan. 29. Last Jan. 15, ten participants posted two wins each: Abring Bautista (Bauer and J and R), Eldie Soriano (J-15 LD Ridge), Dennis Aguilar (Nini), Jericho Rosario (Edong and Gerry Cica), Ramil Medina (Taga-Silang I), Muling Dorado (Anak ng Panday), Jericho Louie (M38 Cica), Alex Tobias (Feb. 26 LPC and First of May) and Eric Shio (Magdalena). Meanwhile, the crowd-drawing Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines (GCAP) 7-Cock Derby returns on Monday and Wednesday, Jan. 24 and 26. This will be the second of 12 GCAP cockfests lined-up at Las Piñas Coliseum to determine the GCAP Cocker of the Year, who stands to receive an eye-popping prize of P1.5 million. So far, Raffy Yulo of Negros (That's It) leads the race with six points after topping the opening derby last Jan. 10 and 12.

JAYVIE Agojo sets her sights on more victories this year. PDI PHOTO

4TH STRAIGHT WIN

Red-hot Agojo tops Faldo Series in HK

LESS than a week after capturing her first RP Ladies Open crown, Jayvie Agojo brought her talent to Hong Kong and ruled the Faldo Series International Trophy for girls' 21-under division at the Hong Kong Golf Club Thursday.

It was actually Agojo's fourth straight victory, counting her triumph in the Manila Ladies Open at Wack Wack last November and her spectacular come-from-behind victory in the Samsung Amateur Tour in Cebu. The feat further underscored the 18-year-old shotmaker's superb form that netted her a scholarship at the Pepperdine University.

Agojo, who also powered the Philippines to a respectable 18th-place finish in last year's World Amateurs while placing 12th overall in the individual competition, actually dished out a pair of not-so solid rounds of 81 and 79 at the tough Eden course for a 160. She, however, came away with a five-stroke victory as her rivals fared worse in the 36-hole tournament which marked the first time European players competed against their Asian counterparts.

Agojo's trip, together with Michael Bibat and delegation head NGAP director Jun Galindez, was supported by the Philippine Sports Commission under OIC William "Butch" Ramirez. Agojo's father, Ireneo, tagged along at his own expense,

She beat Teja Kikelj of Slovenia and South African Suzette Venter, who both had 165s while local bet Eva Yoe made a 170 after rounds of 89-81.

Singapore amateur champion Bibat, who is also a World Amateur veteran and the only other Filipino in the event launched by Nick Faldo in 1996 to identify and nurture the next generation of champion golfers around the world, finished second in the boys' 21-under category with a 144.

Bibat came through with rounds of 71 and 73 but got lost in the face of eventual winner Ben Evans' flawless performance that saw the Englishman fire 65 and 69 that included 10 birdies and an opening-round eagle for a runaway 10-stroke victory over the Filipino.

NGAP wants Frances-Jayvie combine for national squad

By Musong R. Castillo

THE NATIONAL Golf Association of the Philippines has Frances Bondad in its wish list to team up with Jayvie Agojo and form a mean tandem for the coming Southeast Asian Games.

A few days after First Gentleman Mike Arroyo launched the godfather program for the NSAs, the NGAP is set to forward its program of preparations for the biennial meet to patron Ricky Razon.

And the country's governing body for golf made it no secret that it wants Bondad.

"She's always been in our list," said NGAP president Benny Gopez. "We've wanted her since last year when we went to the World Amateurs."

Gopez is taking care of Bondad's application for a Filipino citizenship and believes that Bondad will have her RP passport in two months' time.

"I need all the requirements, especially the birth certificates of her parents."

The NGAP program, which will be supervised by Gen. Roberto Sabularse, will name six women and eight men to the Philippine pool.

The four men and three women who will make the teams will be known three months before the SEAG, which stakes a total of four gold medals in golf.

BONDAD PDI PHOTO

Meanwhile, Bondad, who spent her 17th birthday with relatives in Cavite yesterday feasting on seafood, wished that everything turns out for the better in her desire to represent the country in the Manila SEAG.

"*Opo*," said Bondad, when asked if she would be willing to don the national tri-colors against the best in the region later this year. "That would be a dream come true, playing in front of my countrymen and winning gold for them."

Bondad is spending the rest of her vacation here on the fairways, with patron Tony Arevalo taking her to different courses and fine-tuning her swing a week after finishing third in one of the most memorable final rounds in the history of the RP Ladies Amateur.

Mother Juliet flew in to watch her play and help in formalizing Frances' Filipino citizenship, which they failed to acquire in time for the World Amateur Team championships in Puerto Rico last year.

Born in Los Angeles, California, and raised in Australia, Frances will stay until Feb. 13 and will miss the first two weeks of her senior year in high school at Cerbon College, and will be available if a qualifying tournament for the SEAG team will be held.

"I hope that it happens sooner than later," Frances said of the qualifying. "I'll definitely take part in it. No question about it.'

Not since the time of Jennifer Rosales and Dorothy Delasin has the Philippines had a truly formidable ladies' team in the biennial meet, and the country can have a similar team if Bondad can join Agojo.

Agojo will leave this August to take up a collegiate golf scholarship at Pepperdine University and will be busy with school like Bondad.

Agojo showed her mettle in the World Am, shooting a final day-best 68 that catapulted the Philippines to joint 18th place and to a spot in The Spirit tournament in Houston this year, where only the top 20 teams in the world are invited.

Aguilar enters Moto-X

CLARK, PAMPANGA—Former Asian Motocross champion Glenn Aguilar of Caltex Revtex and the whole RP Team try to reclaim Asian dominance as they compete against the best local riders today in Round 2 of the 2005 Philippine National Motocross Series at the Namssa-Clark Eagle Raceway at the West Airfield in the Clark Special Economic Zone here.

Aguilar, the 2003 Asian champion, and his fellow Nationals see the event as a tune-up for the kickoff of the 2005 FIM-UAM Asian Motocross Series in Guam, USA, on Feb. 6. Barring any incident, Aguilar is expected to dominate the centerpiece Pro Open class.

Also entered are Bebet de la Cruz and Kenneth San Andres.

So, I say anyone supporting **EIA (equine infectious anemia)** eradication program is lacking in normal intelligence or understanding, is slow witted or dull.

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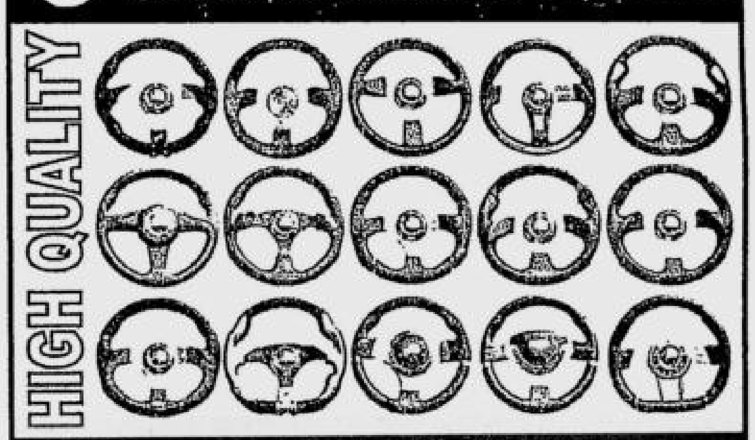
http://www.donblazer.com



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Jordan's formula for success

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

IN 1998, when Michael Jordan was already 36, the world's greatest basketball player of all time was still at the top of his game. How he was able to maintain his dominating reign in the NBA that saw him win six NBA titles playing for Chicago is credited in huge part to his personal trainer, Tim Grover.

Jordan hired Grover in 1989 to create a fitness program that would help him withstand the relentless pounding of NBA play. It was also Grover who trained Scottie Pippen and Ron Harper, who both successfully battled injuries and played superb basketball past the age of 30.

And you know what? Even Tiger Woods is now among Tim Grover's clients. If you don't know Tiger Woods, you've got a problem, buddy.

Anyways, if you want to be a Jordan wannabe, a Woods wannabe, Tim Grover is the man for you.

Here are some tips from Grover for you to perform better, whether you are an athlete or simply an office worker or an executive, or anything. His program will make you experience fewer tired days and sleep-deprived nights. As writer Bob Condor wrote about Grover in Playboy, "With Grover's tips, you will recover quicker from intense workouts. You can boost your energy and lessen the risk of injury."

To the millionaires who have forgotten about the value of exercise, listen to Condor: "You'll never be able to fly like Jordan, but what would you do with all that money, anyway?"

Here's Tim Grover, as told to Bob Condor:

LOSE THE ATTITUDE: "Guys in their 20s think their bodies are indestructible," says Grover. "They neglect to do any sort of warm-up or cool down. A bad habit starts right there."

Research shows that most injuries occur in the first or last six minutes of a workout or game. The proper warm-up will protect against most mishaps, especially if you recognize and attend to potential trouble spots. Before you engage in physical activity, you should skip rope or do moderate aerobic activity to break a light sweat. Your muscles will then be warm enough for a stretching routine. Make the effort to stretch, even if it cuts into your time on the track or court.

PLAY THE GAME: "There's no exercise in the weight room that correlates directly to your sport," explains Grover. "If you want to improve your basketball shot or tennis serve, you have to get on the court. A bench press has nothing to do with athletic performance."

Weight training has its place, though—and that's in building a foundation of power and strength. It also guards against injuries. The squat, for instance, does more than provide a focal point for muscle heads at the gym. It stabilizes your lower body and torso.

SPEAKING OF GOALS: "Every workout should have a goal," says Grover.

The first A in Attack Athletics Inc., Grover's Chicago-based training and sports enhancement company, stands for ambition. Grover insists on specific goals for all his clients, who include the NBA's Grant Hill, Kevin Garnett, Juwan Howard and Michael Finley, plus Tiger Woods and the Seattle Mariners' power-hitting shortstop Alex Rodriguez.

Your goal may be as simple as a certain number of repetitions or making fewer unforced errors than in the last racquetball match. But Grover promises your training results will zoom if you set a definite target.

That should do it for now. More tomorrow.

***

FASTBREAK. My family condoles deeply with fellow sportswriters Recah Trinidad and Clyde Mariano. Recah lost his mother, Jacinta Aguelon of Cavite, and Clyde his wife, Dolores Abalos of Domalandan, Lingayen, Pangasinan. They were quiet, dignified and gentle ladies. Our prayers for the eternal repose of their souls.

Brookline overrated in Lehman's terms

SAN DIEGO—Tom Lehman has a videotape of the Ryder Cup that he keeps as much for proof as posterity, and not just because 1999 was the only time in the last 12 years the Americans won.

Of particular interest is the 17th green at Brookline.

In what became the most indelible image in Ryder Cup history, Justin Leonard made a 45-foot birdie putt that ultimately clinched an unlikely US victory and unleashed a celebration that crossed the line of etiquette. American players, caddies and wives raced onto the green, even though Jose Maria Olazabal still had a putt to tie.

It was ugly.

It was wrong.

And apparently, it's not over.

Not long after Lehman was introduced in November as the next Ryder Cup captain, just about every reaction coming out of Europe began with something that happened five years ago and lasted only 42 seconds.

Lehman knows how long because he watched the tape with a timer in his hand.

"There ought to be a movie," Lehman said. "Call it, 'The 42 Seconds to Eternity.' From the time the ball went in the hole when Justin made that putt until the time the green was clear was 42 seconds. I wanted to see how long it took."

Honest mistake

Lehman agrees it was a mistake, but an honest mistake.

"But the statute of limitations has run out," he said. "It's time to move on."

Fat chance.

LEHMAN

Lehman, more than any other player, for some reason has become the poster boy for bad behavior at Brookline.

He was 3-0 in Ryder Cup singles, beating Seve Ballesteros in a riveting match at Oak Hill in 1995, and never missing a green in regulation when he beat Lee Westwood in 1999.

No one mentioned that when he was named captain.

He is a former British Open champion and PGA Tour player of the year, and he played in the final group at the US Open four straight years.

Hardly anyone mentions that these days.

If people want to criticize his selection as captain, they could look at his overrated record compared with other candidates—only five PGA Tour victories and three Ryder Cup teams.

No one talks about that, either.

It's all about Brookline.

And even though players don't hold it against Lehman, they continue to associate him with Brookline.

Consider this opening comment from Padraig Harrington:

"I certainly think it was a good choice of captain for them. I think he'll do a good job. I've said this before about Brookline ..."

And from Paul McGinley:

"I played with him the year he won the Open, and I've always found him to be a perfect gentleman. Now I didn't play in Brookline ..."

Colin Montgomerie was asked recently why Lehman gets singled out for all the bad blood from 1999. Quietly and quizzically, without a hint of criticism, he replied, "Well, he was first on the (17th) green, wasn't he?"

Monty couldn't be sure, playing in the match behind. All he saw was a blur of ugly maroon shirts worn by the Americans that day, and worse yet, maroon sweaters and cream-colored skirts worn by the wives.

"I've seen it a billion times," Jim Furyk said. "I haven't watched that closely to see where Tom was. But for a million dollars, I couldn't swear he was even on the 17th green."

Why pick on Lehman?

"No idea," Tiger Woods said. "It wasn't like he was the only one."

During his study of the 42 seconds, Lehman found out exactly where he was.

First out of the pack was the late Bruce Edwards, who was in charge of the caddies that week. Then came another caddie, presumably Bob Riefke, who was working for Leonard. Then it was Woods, with a spread-eagle leap before sprinting toward Leonard. He was followed by Davis Love III.

And then Lehman.

"I know I was the fifth," Lehman said. "And I know I never set foot on the green. Not that it matters."

In some respects, Lehman was a victim of timing.

Blood boiling

In the immediate aftermath, when European blood was boiling, Sam Torrance singled out Lehman on Sky TV when he called the incident disgusting and said of Lehman, "And he calls himself a man of God."

European captain Mark James, the ultimate goat at Brookline, took Lehman to task in his book for leading the gallery in a rendition of "God Bless America."

Lehman said he threw a roundhouse fist pump after making a big putt during one of his matches, and a European player he declined to identify shot him a nasty glare. He confronted the player a month later.

It couldn't have been the fist pump. Europeans don't exactly tip their caps when a big putt drops.

"He said, 'It was out of your character.' That was the answer," Lehman said, shaking his head. "I guess they thought it was out of character for me to be so emotional."

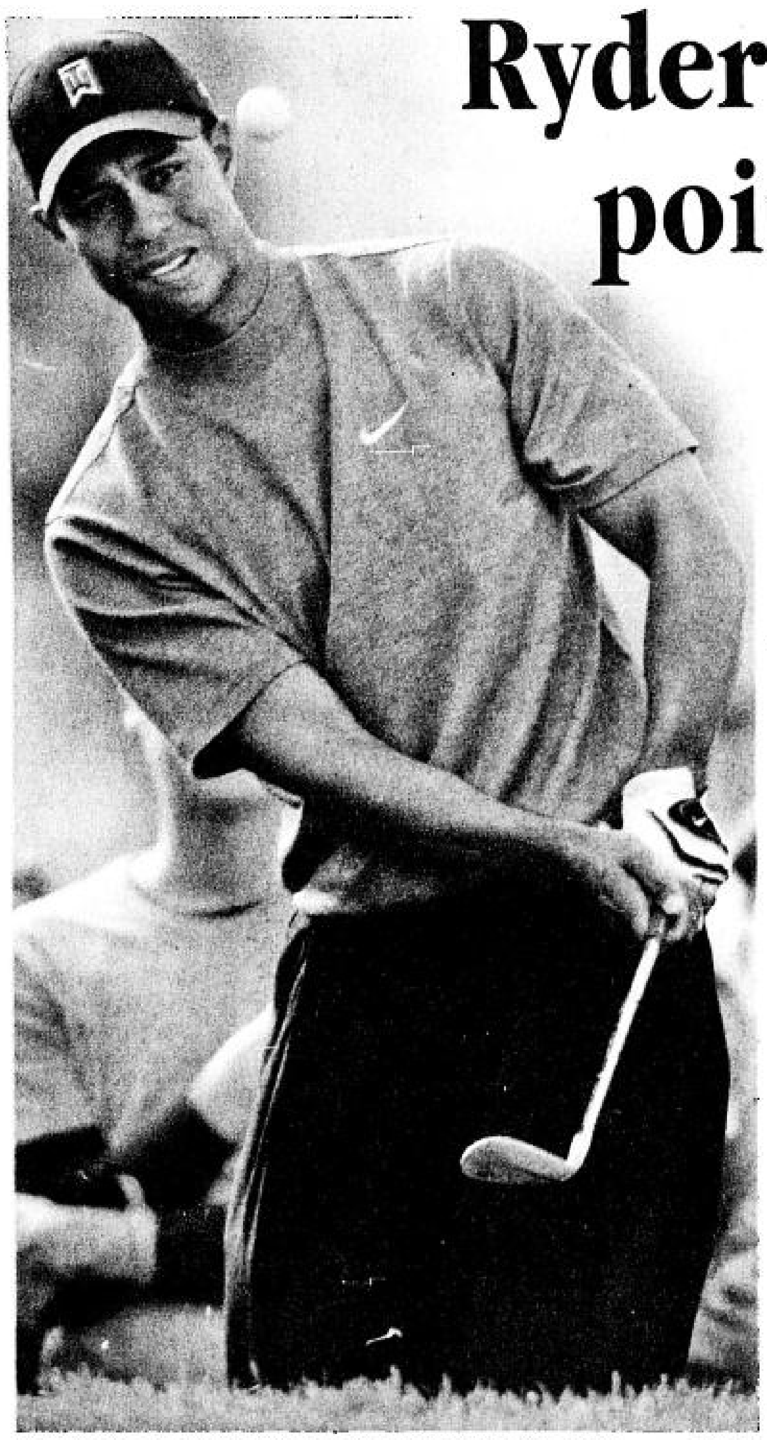
Lehman said he and Torrance have made their peace, and that Torrance sent him a nice note upon his selection as captain. And he believes, as Hal Sutton said during his tenure, that it's time to move on.

Whether that happens is doubtful.

Fred Couples might have summed it up best when asked why Europeans continue to bring up Brookline whenever Lehman's name is mentioned:

"Probably," Couples said, "because he's the captain." AP

Ryder Cup captain makes point via Buick golf tilt



TIGER Woods, battling illness, chips onto the 13th green. REUTERS

SAN DIEGO—Not long after he was appointed Ryder Cup captain, Tom Lehman said he would like to play for the US team next year in Ireland. Considering he hasn't won in five years, some people thought it was a joke.

Apparently not.

"It's a goal. It's a dream," Lehman said after tying his career-low round Thursday, a 10-under 62 on the North course at Torrey Pines that gave him a one-shot lead over Dean Wilson in the Buick Invitational.

"I'd like to be able to play well to be on the team," he said. "It would be a unique situation."

Lehman said he would still remain captain, working with assistants Loren Roberts and Corey Pavin. There hasn't been a playing captain in the Ryder Cup since Arnold Palmer in 1963 at East Lake.

Now, the 2006 matches are 20 months away. And Lehman has said he wouldn't take a spot on the team if he slipped in the back door by relying on a bunch of top-10 finishes without winning. Plus, the bulk of the Ryder Cup points will be earned next year, and Lehman conceded "it would be an upset" if he made the team.

"But if my game keeps progressing, you never know," he said.

The idea Friday was for his game to progress by shifting over to the South course, which is so tough that players don't need a reminder it will hold the 2008 US Open, while the North course will hold a bunch of corporate tents.

Just look at the leaderboard after one round of the Buick Invitational.

All but two of the top scores came from the North course, which measures a meager 6,282 meters (6,873 yards) and played nearly three shots easier than the South course.

The exceptions were Aaron Baddeley (66) and Peter Lonard (67), whose round included an ace on the par-3 third hole with a 5-iron.

Among the top six players in the world at Torrey Pines, only Ernie Els played the North course and took advantage. Despite a few sloppy shots, he took advantage with nine birdies for a 7-under 65.

"You have one chance to shoot something really decent," Els said. "And you've got to hope for the best on the South. These are totally different. One is like a pitch-and-putt, and then you get to the real world."

Over in the real world, Tiger Woods struggled with lingering effects from the flu by making a 45-foot birdie on the par-3 third and twice saving par with long putts for a 69, putting him in a large group that included Sergio Garcia.

Vijay Singh, who missed his only cut last year at the Buick Invitational, birdied his final hole for a 71 on the South. Phil Mickelson made an inauspicious debut by hitting only five fairways, playing the par 5s in 2 over and shooting 72.

The average score on the South course was 72.43, compared with 69.56 on the North. No other PGA Tour event played on multiple courses has such a disparity.

A year ago, the North course was 3.53 strokes easier than the South course at Torrey Pines. The next greatest difference in courses was at the Bob Hope Classic, where La Quinta was 2.35 strokes higher than Indian Wells.

Arron Oberholser polished off his 64 on the North course and already was looking ahead.

"It's nice to get off to a good start, knowing I've got to play the Monster tomorrow," he said. AP

Biggest Samsung tournament ever tees off

ONE HUNDRED fifty-one students from 33 schools in Metro Manila and nearby cities clash for team and individual honors in the biggest ever staging of the Samsung Interscholastics golf championships today at the picturesque Tagaytay Highlands Golf and Country Club course.

Tee-off time is 7 a.m.

As the field surpassed the number of entries in all three previous editions, Samsung Electronics president and CEO Sang Youl Eom welcomed the positive development and bared that the vision they've set for the tournament is coming into shape.

"Schools are getting more active now in the promotion of the sport and we can see another boom for junior golf in the horizon," said Eom, who also thanked the support of the Tagaytay Highlands and Midlands management led by chair Willy Ocier for allowing the weekend schedule.

Tagaytay Midlands will host the last two rounds of the Interscholastics.

The field guns for top awards in the team and individual categories of the college, high school and elementary divisions.

The tourney is also backed by Tokyo Tokyo Great Japanese, ABC Beverage, KZG by Custom Clubmakers, Rudy Project, Coppertone Sports, Junior Golf Foundation of the Philippines, Rogin E, Jam 88.3, Wave 89.1, Magic 89.98, 99.5 RT, 103.5 K-Lite and Killer Bee.

Among those in the field are the Superal siblings, Wolen, Crystal Faith and Princess and reigning world jungolf champion in the 7-8 years division JR Gonzales, who have stood out in the jungolf circuit.

Boy Blue Ocampo of the organizing Professional Sports Management Group also took note of the attendance, saying the success of junior players in major events like the Philippine Ladies Open is a big factor.

"The jungolf sweep pulled off by Jayvie Agojo, Bev Mendoza and Geleen Handog in the Ladies Open not to mention the strong performance of other jungolfers is another proof that our youth program is working and we really need more tournaments to keep them competitive," he said.

Participating teams: Academy of St. John, Ateneo, Brent, British School Manila, Canossa Academy, Colegio de San Agustin, La Salle-Taft, La Salle-Lipa, Elizabeth Seton, European International School, Global City Innovative College, Golden Acres, Holy Family Parochial, Holy Infant, International School-Manila, Koiska, La Salle-Greenhills; La Salle-Zobel;

Las Piñas High, Lourdes-Mandaluyong, Lukban School, Maria Montessori-QC, Miriam, OB Montessori, Povada, San Beda-Alabang, San Benildo Integrated, Southridge, St. Paul-Pasig, The Master's Academy, University of Asia&Pacific, University of the East and Xavier.

Vick's good, but Falcons need support cast

ATLANTA—Quarterback Michael Vick understands he needs all the help he can get if the Atlanta Falcons are to upset the Philadelphia Eagles this weekend to reach the Super Bowl.

"People say I'm the X-factor and I'm the key to winning," Vick says. "I think the key to winning is our team coming to play as a team and playing together. That's what is going to win the football game for us."

Vick might be excused for falling back on clichés about being a team player to keep his teammates happy. After all, the 24-year-old didn't get the NFL's richest contract—including $37 million in bonuses last month—because he's a nice guy.

No, Vick got it because he's something special: A rare combination of speed, moves and arm strength that the NFL has never seen before and will likely not see again for some time.

But even Michael Jordan needed his supporting cast to come through to win NBA championships with the Chicago Bulls. Scottie Pippen was beside him for all six, and Dennis Rodman for three.

Fortunately for Vick, he may be the best player on either side of the field on Sunday in the NFL Championship, but the Falcons bring a pretty good supporting cast into the biggest game he has played in his young pro career.

They've got a running game that's made twice as good by Vick's ability to turn sacks into gains, special teams that can turn a game around, and a defense that outscored the St. Louis Rams, 2-0, in the second half of their playoff game last weekend.

Without Vick, the Falcons are a decent enough team.

But it's also a team with the potential to stink up the place, just as the Falcons did in losing, 27-0, last month in Tampa Bay. Vick was his usual exciting self outside the pocket that day, but he also threw two interceptions, lost two fumbles and was sacked five times.

That won't do in Philadelphia where Vick not only has to play well, but running back Warrick Dunn has to be a threat and the special teams must come through. AP

FOURTH seed Marat Safin gets up after twisting an a
thrilling four-setter against Croatia's Mario Ancic in
Australian Open.

The world acco

MELBOURNE, Australia—Marat Safin endured a four-set, third-round win over Mario Ancic at the Australian Open on Friday, then shared his detailed preparation for the match. Or not.

Asked if he enjoyed playing in the heat of the afternoon or at night, Safin, who has been finalist here in two of the last three years, didn't need to think too long about his reply.

"In the afternoon, you wake up, have breakfast in bed, come out and play tennis," replied Safin, adding "life is too short" not to make the most of such opportunities. Only Safin, known for his wisecracking, carefree quips, could get away with referring to a sleep-in and breakfast in bed as a missed opportunity.

A few other Safinisms from Friday:

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Justine traine too hard, says Navratilovag

MELBOURNE, Australia—Tennis legend Martina Navratilova believes the fitness problems of Belgian former world No. 1 Justine Henin-Hardenne could have been self-inflicted.

Navratilova, speaking after teaming with Daniela Hantuchova to record a 6-2, 6-0 second round doubles victory over Australia's Trudi Musgrave and Christina Wheeler, voiced alarm over injury problems affecting the women's game.

The 48-year-old winner of a staggering 58 grand slam titles is a firm believer that the top women are playing too many tournaments and not getting enough rest, suffering premature burnout as a result.

But she believes reigning Australian Open champion Henin-Hardenne—who
forced to pull out wi
knee injury, and who m
much of last season w
virus—could have paid
price for working too
in training.

"When I saw Ju
training, I thought,
God, that woman w
you know, very, very h
and I was wondering
long she can keep it
Navratilova said.
there's your answer."

"I mean, you see th
sult. She's in her p
physically. Obviously
overdid it a little bit.
she knows that, and
probably pull back the
a little bit.

Navratilova mean
said she was convinced
women's tennis was pa
the price for an over
season."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Safin turns pain into gain; Federer, Williams advance

nkle and goes on to win a
he third round of the
REUTERS

MELBOURNE, Australia—Not many players benefit from an injury. Then again, Marat Safin has always been a little different.

Playing better after he twisted his long-tender right ankle, fourth-seeded Safin was testy at times but kept his famous temper in check in a 6-4, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 third-round victory Friday against Croatia's Mario Ancic at the Australian Open.

Still, injuries did take their toll in the season-opening Grand Slam.

Top-ranked Roger Federer was broken in his first service game before getting back on track and spent less than two sets on center court when Finland's Jarkko Nieminen called it quits with an abdominal muscle tear.

Lisa Raymond lasted only one game of her doubles match before retiring with a back muscle strain, leaving her doubtful for her third-round match Saturday against French Open champion Anastasia Myskina.

Men's French Open champion Gaston Gaudio, seeded 10th, was able to continue after treatment on both thighs, but Dominik Hrbaty upset him in five sets despite 88 unforced errors.

In women's singles, second-ranked Amelie Mauresmo and US Open titlist Svetlana Kuznetsova both had straight-set victories and will face unseeded opponents in the fourth round, while 48-year-old Martina Navratilova advanced to the third round of the women's doubles with Daniela Hantuchova.

Wimbledon winner Maria Sharapova, seeded fourth, had a much easier time under the lights than dealing with the daytime heat in her last match, when she needed packs of ice to cool off her neck and shoulders. She needed only 50 minutes to beat China's Li Na, who committed 27 errors and had only three winners in losing, 6-0, 6-2.

TOP SEED Roger Federer slaps a forehand to Jarkko Nieminen. Federer won his 24th straight match after his opponent retired. REUTERS

Sharapova, one of three Russians in the top six seeds, next meets 15th-seeded Silvia Farina Elia of Italy. In a warning for the rest of the field, the 17-year-old Sharapova said: "I'm a much better player than I was seven months ago."

No. 7 Serena Williams, beaten by Sharapova in the Wimbledon final last July, had some bad news for her rivals, too. She said her serve, inconsistent earlier, felt good as she ended the run of wild-card entry Sania Mirza, the first Indian woman to make it to the second round of a Grand Slam. Williams, who next meets No. 11 Nadia Petrova, finished off the 6-1, 6-4 victory with a second-serve ace, then skipped off the court.

"Finally, after forever it seems, [I was] able to feel my serve," said Williams. "So I was really happy about that."

Safin looked tight while just missing the lines early against Ancic, but broke the 2004 Wimbledon semifinalist in the fifth game. He finished off the first set with a pair of aces after squandering a 40-0 lead.

Ancic ran off the next four games. Safin got one break back, but Ancic then held twice at love to even up the match.

Both players became increasingly irritable as their unforced errors piled up, muttering to themselves or yelling in anguish at missed opportunities. Safin, notorious for smashing rackets early in his career, often hung his head or stared at his racket as if it had betrayed him. At one point, he rapped his head with his knuckles, trying to regain focus.

"It's a wake-up call," Safin explained. "Sometimes my head goes away and doesn't come back—I have to get it back here."

After hitting a forehand long to give Safin a break for a 3-1 lead in the third set, Ancic—back to wearing white again—bashed a towering fly ball that landed in the seats. Safin netted a backhand on the next point and banged a ball just as high that landed near the umpire's chair.

In between the errors, the two men exchanged heavy topspin drives that often caught the tape during long rallies.

After going up 2-0 in the fourth set, Safin tried to push off to go for a backhand, rolled his right ankle and went down as Ancic held to pull within 2-1. Safin already had the ankle taped, as he has over the last two years, and a trainer reinforced the wrap at the changeover and gave him a painkiller pill.

Safin took his next service game at love with an ace, joking with a line judge who'd earlier called one of his serves wide. He later said the injury relaxed him.

"It took all the pressure a little bit from me in the match because I was a little bit uptight," he said. "When I twist my ankle, I just kind of stopped a little bit thinking about the way I was playing. And I played quite a good game afterward." *AP*

rding to Marat and other Aussie Open notes

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be here. If it would be a dif-
I might not be here at all."

ing Amelie

rs Amelie Mauresmo hasn't
Martina Hingis for Hingis'
n" comment about her six
t the Australian Open.
Hingis beat Mauresmo in

the Australian Open final. During the tournament, she referred to Mauresmo as "half a man."

Hingis denied making the remark but her comments were widely reported and televised. They came after the powerfully built Mauresmo became the first top player since Martina Navratilova to talk publicly about being homosexual.

At that year's French Open, Mauresmo said Hingis was "stupid for what she said; she was out of line."

On Friday, Mauresmo, following her third-round win over Ana Ivanovic, was asked whether she had any comment about Hingis' comeback tournament at Pattaya, Thailand, on Jan. 31.

"I have nothing to say, absolutely nothing at all," Mauresmo said when asked at the end of her media conference.

When pressed for an answer as she walked out of the interview room, she again replied: "Nothing," and accentuated the point by gesturing with her hands.

Hingis was 22 when she retired in 2002 after operations on both ankles. The five-time Grand Slam singles champion was the youngest player to reach No. 1 at age 16 years, 6 months.

She is entered in the Thailand tournament but has not decided whether she will continue playing after that.

Flying times ahead

Andy Roddick will be piling up the air miles between Texas and Florida with his decision to take on former US Davis Cup and Olympic coach Dean Goldfine.

Roddick lives in Austin, Texas, while Goldfine, who began coaching Roddick in late December, is based in Boca Raton, Florida. Roddick cut ties with former coach Brad Gilbert last month, saying the relationship had "run its course."

The second-ranked Roddick said after his win over Greg Rusedski at the Australian Open that he spent a week in Florida beginning Jan. 1, his first extended session with Goldfine.

"I'll be spending a lot of time in Boca most likely, or more time," said Roddick, who plays Jurgen Melzer of Austria in the third round on Saturday.

Roddick says he's already noticed a difference in his footwork.

"It's something we went at in the offseason," said Roddick. *AP*

Williams predicts Indian teenager will go a long way

MELBOURNE, Australia—Sania Mirza arrived at the Australian Open last week with little fanfare and modest ambitions. On Friday, she left as a star in her homeland and with the praise of Serena Williams.

Mirza, capitalizing on a wild-card entry, became the first Indian woman to make the third round of a Grand Slam tournament when she beat Hungarian Petra Mandula on Wednesday.

That win earned her a shot at six-time Grand Slam winner Williams, who, as expected, won Friday's third-round match-up, 6-1, 6-4. But Williams came away impressed by what she had seen from the 18-year-old Mirza, who lives in Hyderabad.

"She has a very solid game, especially to be so young, she's only 18," Williams said of Mirza, ranked 166. "I definitely see a very bright future for her."

As the pair shook hands at the net after the match, Williams spent some time talking to Mirza.

"I told her to keep up the good work because it was good to see someone from India for the first time do so well. I told her to keep fighting," said Williams.

Mirza, who started playing tennis as a 6-year-old after initially being unable to get any coaching because she was too small, overcame a nervous start to produce a stronger display in the second set.

"I've had butterflies in my stomach for the last two days and last night I couldn't sleep properly," Mirza said.

SERENA Williams admits her latest opponent has what it takes to rise to the top. REUTERS

But she settled into her rhythm in the second set and twice saved match points before Williams, seeded seventh, sealed the win with a second service ace down the middle.

"The first set I was really tight but I had fun," said Mirza, on her first trip to a Grand Slam tournament. *AP*

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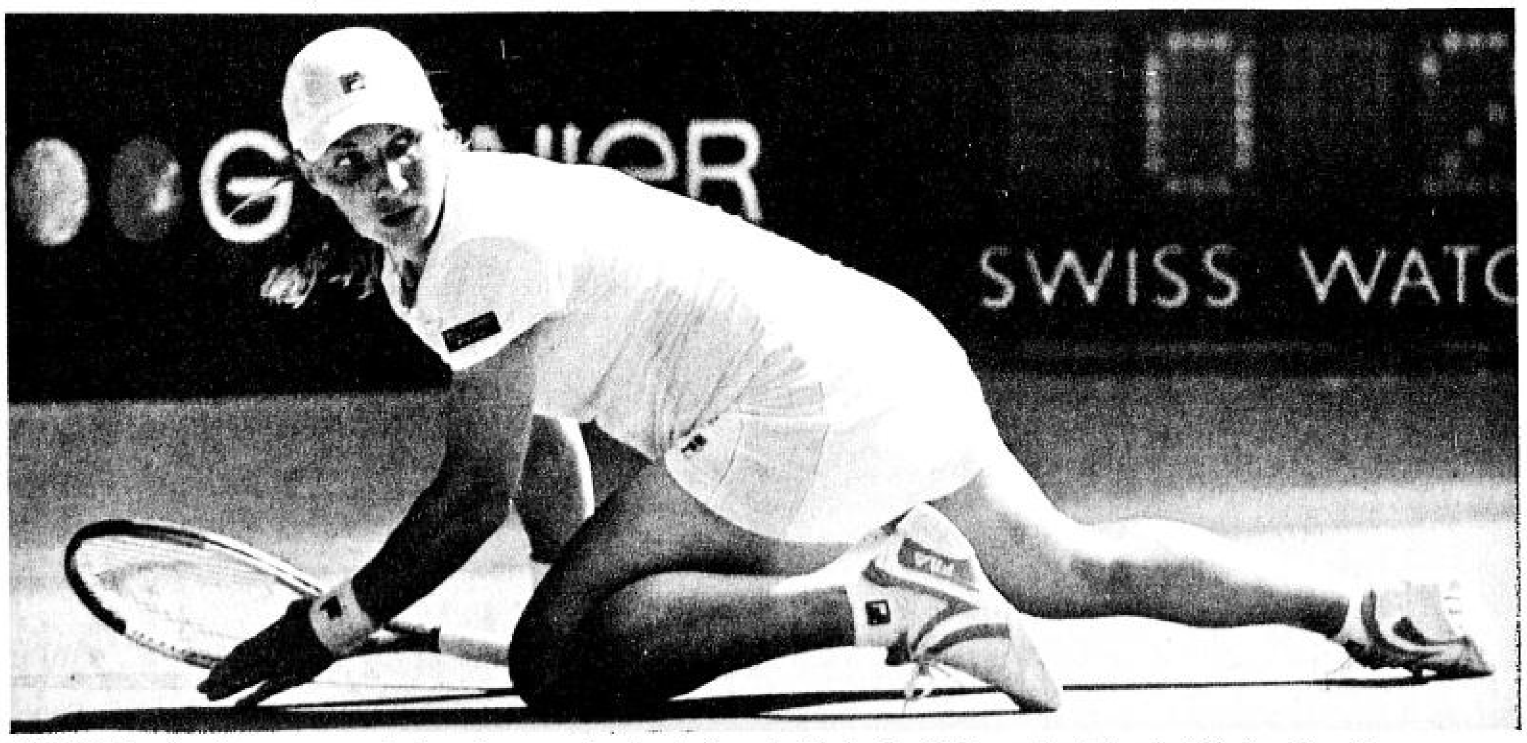

RUSSIA'S Svetlana Kuznetsova crawls along the court after lunging for a shot during her third round match against Mariana Diaz-Oliva. REUTERS

InqBox
Question of the Week
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T-Mac burns former team; Kings slay Cavs

ORLANDO, Florida—Playing in Orlando for the first time since a bitter parting last summer, Tracy McGrady scored 27 points Thursday to lead a balanced offense as the Houston Rockets beat the Magic, 108-99.

Yao Ming added 20 points, and Bob Sura had 19 points, 11 rebounds and nine assists. David Wesley scored 18, and Juwan Howard 13.

It was McGrady's insistence on playing with a decent supporting cast, something the Magic could never provide, that prompted his departure in a blockbuster, seven-player trade.

"I was so focused," said McGrady, winner of two scoring titles in four seasons with Orlando. "I knew the reception I was going to get, but while I was out on the basketball court I was just trying to find ways to get myself going and make my team better."

Steve Francis, the biggest name Orlando received in the deal, led the Magic with 28 points and nine assists.

"I think he realizes that other guys getting touches, getting involved early helps closing games out," said Magic forward Grant Hill, sidelined for almost all of McGrady's stay in Orlando. "It might not be as sexy as scoring 50 ... but you can see the growth on his part."

Hill had 21 points on 10-of-16 shooting, the day after an MRI exam on his sore right wrist showed only a bruise.

Mavericks 99, Clippers 77

In Dallas, Jason Terry scored 11 of his 15 points in the third quarter, when the Mavericks went ahead to stay against the suddenly struggling Los Angeles Lakers.

With Avery Johnson coaching while Don Nelson missed his first game after shoulder surgery, the Mavericks went on a 14-6 run over the final 3:44 of the third quarter. Terry had half the points in the game-turning stretch.

Los Angeles has lost four straight and six of eight. The Clippers (18-21) are three games under .500 for the first time this season.

Dirk Nowitzki led the Mavericks with 28 points. Josh Howard added 13 points and Erick Dampier had 11 rebounds.

Elton Brand had 24 points and 14 rebounds for the Clippers.

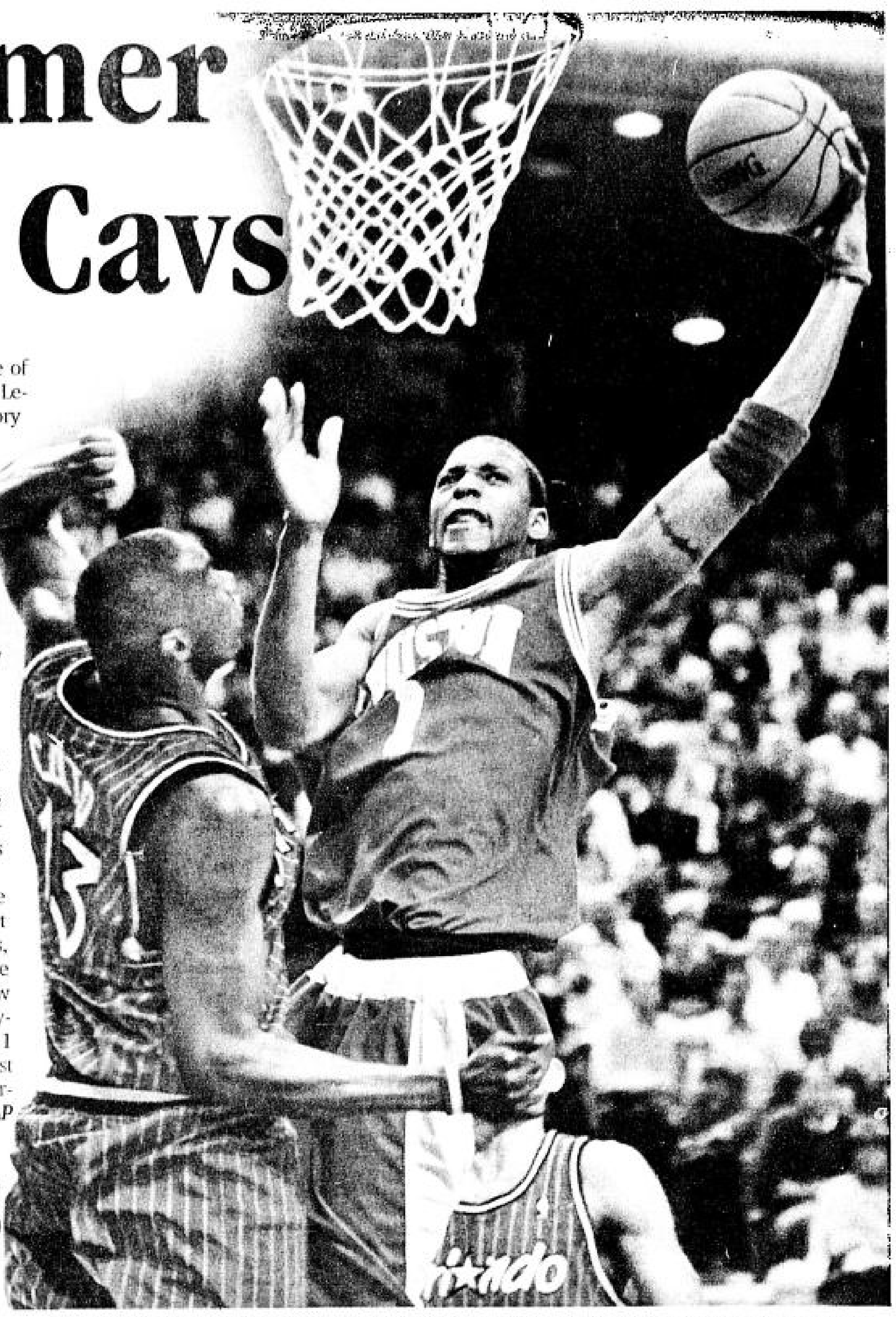
Kings 123, Cavaliers 96

In Sacramento, California, Mike Bibby had 17 points, 11 assists and 10 rebounds for the second triple-double of his career as Sacramento shut down LeBron James in its sixth straight victory over Cleveland.

Chris Webber had 27 points, 13 rebounds and seven assists for the Kings, who streaked to a big lead in the third quarter with an impressive exhibition of arguably the NBA's best passing offense. Sacramento took control with a 16-5 run early in the third quarter, with each basket seemingly resulting from an excellent pass or an eye-catching steal.

Peja Stojakovic scored 19 points and Cuttino Mobley had 18, while Brad Miller added 16 on 7-of-7 shooting. With Bibby leading the way, Sacramento racked up 34 assists and just eight turnovers in its highest-scoring game of the season.

One night after becoming the youngest player in NBA history to get a triple-double, James had 18 points, eight rebounds and six assists while disappearing for long stretches. Drew Gooden scored 17 points and Zydrunas Ilgauskas had 16 points and 11 rebounds for the Cavs, who also lost guard Jeff McInnis in the fourth quarter with an apparent foot injury. *AP*



HOUSTON Rockets forward Tracy McGrady lifts off for a slam dunk against Orlando Magic center Kelvin Cato (left) during first half NBA action in Orlando, Florida. REUTERS

All-Star vote: Yao still leads; James sneaks past Iverson

NEW YORK—Yao Ming leads Shaquille O'Neal by more than 50,000 votes in the race for the No. 1 overall spot in the final days of NBA All-Star balloting.

With voting closing on Sunday, The Houston Rockets center had 2,153,039 votes, while the Miami's O'Neal topped the East with 2,099,201.

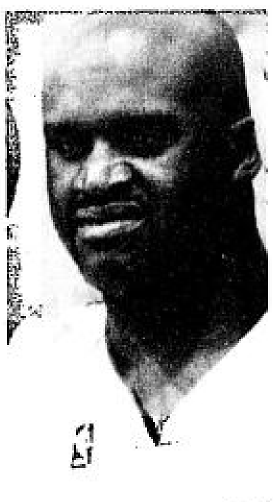
The closest race for a starting spot through Thursday was for the second forward spot in the East. New Jersey's Vince Carter had 1,505,169 votes, followed by Orlando's Grant Hill with 1,273,846 and Indiana's Jermaine O'Neal with 1,167,698.

The All-Star starters will be announced on Feb. 3. The game is on Feb. 20 in Denver.

Minnesota's Kevin Garnett, the reigning league MVP, is third overall, leading West forwards with 1,755,124 votes, followed by San Antonio's Tim Duncan (1,446,824).

YAO

JAMES



O'NEAL

Yao's teammate Tracy McGrady leads West guards with 1,688,159 votes, and Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant is next with 1,551,177.

In the East, Cleveland's LeBron James (1,351,369) edged back ahead of Philadelphia's Allen Iverson (1,341,824) among guards. *AP*

McGrady sued over dog attack

ORLANDO, Florida—Houston Rockets star Tracy McGrady is being sued by a man who had the tip of his nose bitten off by the NBA player's Rottweiler last year.

Fred Chamberlin, 57, was working at McGrady's home in southwest Orange County on Aug. 25 when the dog attacked him.

The lawsuit, asking for unspecified damages, was filed on Wednesday in Orange County Circuit Court.

"What we want is for a jury to decide what's fair, as far as paying Fred for what has had to come out of pocket, both in the past and in the future," Chamberlin's attorney, Eric Faddis, said on Thursday. "He's definitely going to need more plastic surgery, and we've got to be sure he has the resources to pay."

McGrady employed Chamberlin as a home maintenance engineer at his 18,000-square-foot (1,620-square-meter) mansion. The two-time scoring champion played for the Orlando Magic for four years before being traded to the Rockets last summer.

McGrady, in Orlando on Thursday to play his former team, acknowledged his dog attacked Chamberlin and nearly bit his nose off.

"I feel terrible," McGrady said. "I didn't think he had it in him."

McGrady said his pet is a "very vicious dog," but that he is usually nice. He did not have the dog euthanized after the attack.

According to Faddis, Chamberlin was attacked on the second floor of the mansion after climbing a flight of stairs. When Max jumped him, Chamberlin fell backward down the 11 stairs.

"The dog was trained to attack on command, and Fred has no idea why it chose to attack him," Faddis said.

Bata gains Derby City Classic final

FILIPINO billiard master Efren "Bata" Reyes defeated David Matlock and Tony Chohan of the United States by similar 3-2 scores Friday to move closer toward keeping his title in the 2005 Derby City Classic One Pocket Division at the Executive West Hotel in Louisville, Kentucky, USA.

Matlock, who earlier topped the Banked Pool event, led at 2-0, only to crumble when Reyes took the next three games.

Reyes advanced after that, arranging a duel with Tony Chohan, who got a bye in the final seven.

Chohan led at 2-1 only to lose his touch and the match.

Reyes will face the winner of the match between former US Open champion Corey Deuel and Bob Hercik, winner over Jeremy Jones and Charlie "Hilbilly" Bryant, respectively.

Reyes had earlier beaten US-based compatriot Jose "Amang" Parica. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

TEST DRIVE

German Formula One driver Michael Schumacher drives his Ferrari during a test session at the Montmelo racetrack, near Barcelona, Spain. Schumacher is coming off yet another successful season and looks forward to another winning year. AP

Antonio's rating drops after draw

FILIPINO Grandmaster Joey Antonio Jr. settled for a draw with IM Jean Herbert of Canada in the eighth and penultimate round yesterday to share 8th to 9th places in the 2005 Montreal World Chess Tournament at the Saint-Laurent Recreation Center in Montreal, Canada.

The draw snapped Antonio's three-game losing streak, which came against GM Arnaud Hauchard of France, top seed GM Dmitry Jakovenko of Russia and GM Alexander-Nataf Igor of France.

Despite the draw, Antonio's total still stands at a measly 2.5 points anchored on a mere win against three ties and four losses in the 10-man meet.

Even a win in his final outing against IM Eugene Perelshteyn will not save Antonio's rating, which, at best, will lose 16.3 points.

A loss, though, will drag his rating down by 26.3 points.

The 21-year-old Jakovenko remained undefeated after drawing Perelshteyn. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

Go exhorts athletes: Bring record gold medal haul in SEAG

ATHLETICS chief Go Teng Kok yesterday challenged Filipino tracksters to win the highest number of golds in the history of the country's campaign in the Southeast Asian Games in the 2005 edition here.

"You've proven yourselves in the past, in foreign shores," Go said. "Now, you must show your true worth again, and right before your countrymen. Do not let our beloved country down."

Go, who has been very busy the past few months with his Philippine Olympic Committee and Philippine SEA Games organizing Committee chores, took some time out to meet the Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association coaching staff and some members of the vaunted "GTK Army" to issue the challenge.

That, and a piece of good news that no less than First Gentleman Mike Arroyo is among those who pledged all-out support to RP athletics were met by a positive response from the Filipino tracksters.

The First Gentleman Foundation, through executive director Tessa Mangahas, assured support to the tracksters' campaign—making it easy for Go to prepare a better program than what was used when "GTK Army" brought home nine golds from the 2001 edition in Kuala Lumpur.

"I ask you spend most of your time and effort in training," Go said. "But it won't be a sacrifice because the Patafa, with the help of the First Gentleman and the assistance of Ms Tessa Mangahas, will complement you effort."

Go started by directing his staff to look for the best health supplements in the market, local and abroad, for the athletes and an inventory of the existing training equipment.

In the 2001 Games, the Filipino tracksters were provided with enough vitamins and better equipment, resulting with that nine-gold haul and several silvers that fell short of turning to golds.

The decision to hike the salaries of the coaches and an order to house the team in Baguio City are included in the program.

"Our plan is to keep the team intact in Baguio City, which they will only leave to participate in tough competitions in Asia, US and Europe," Go explained. "I also plan to talk to the UAAP, the NCAA and other collegiate leagues to agree in continuing the scholarships of the athletes while they stay, away from families and studies, in Baguio City and abroad."

Go also reconsidered an earlier decision to cancel the National Open in April, issuing invitations to Southeast Asian and Asian nations to test the mettle of "GTK Army" months before the 2005 Games.

"This is practically our last SEA Games in the country. It would be at least a decade later before we host another, so let's make the most out of it. Let us all do our best for the country."

Negros Or. hosts Nat'l students tilt

THE STATE-OF-THE-ART Lamberto Matias Gym will be the main venue for the national finals of the 59th National Students Basketball Championship which will be held from Feb. 27 to March 5 in Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental.

Aside from Matias Gym, which is located at the heart of the city, seven other venues are available for use of the estimated 600 high school and collegiate players who will fly to Dumaguete City to compete for the prestigious national titles.

The other venues are in Silliman University and Foundation University, both located in Dumaguete City; Zamboangeita City, Tanjay City, Bais City, Bayawan City and Sta. Catalina.

Negros Oriental Gov. George Arnaiz said they decided to hold some games outside Dumaguete to give the participants and guests a chance to enjoy the many tourist attractions of the province.

"Our visitors will not only enjoy the camaraderie and competition during the games, but will also have the chance to see for themselves our world-class scenic spots," said Arnaiz. "Of course, we will also provide adequate transportation and security."

Representatives from the organizing Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP) led by Jerry Jimenez from the technical committee has already visited these venues and reported that everything is in place for the prestigious annual event.

"The BAP is very honored to have Negros Oriental and Dumaguete City as our partners for this endeavor. We're very grateful to Governor Arnaiz for his enthusiasm and cooperation to make this event a resounding success," said BAP secretary general Graham Lim.

Most of the senior and junior games, including semifinal and championship matches, will be played at the Lamberto Matias Gym, while Silliman University will host the women's games, and will also serve as billeting for the women players.

Elimination games in the juniors and collegiate division of the tournament sponsored by FedEx, Absolute Mineral Water, Molten, Baker's Fair and Health Options will be played at the six other venues scattered throughout the province of Negros Oriental.

Zamboangeita City and Tanjay City are 25 to 30 minutes away from Dumaguete, Bais is 45 minutes away, while Bayawan City and Sta. Catalina are 90 minutes away.

PUMPED UP

Maria Sharapova of Russia celebrates after defeating Li Na of China, 6-0, 6-2, in the Australian Open at Melbourne Park, Melbourne, Australia. *(Story on page A25.)* AP

Spring Oil nips Taguig; Tribu wins

CEBU CITY—Spring Cooking Oil-backed Laguna Spring bounced back with a come-from-behind 75-70 victory over Forward Taguig Thursday even as Tribu Sugbu downed General Feeds Masters, 90-83, to make it two straight in the NBC Panasonic pre-season basketball tournament at the Cebu Coliseum here.

Marlon Kalaw, Kim Proceso and MC Caceres ignited a 17-8 run midway on the fourth quarter to help the Spring of NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and Laguna Gov. Teresita "Ningning" Lazaro deal last year's NBC runner-up its second straight loss.

The triumph leveled Spring's record at 1-1 following its heartbreaking one-point setback Wednesday at the hands of General Feeds.

"It was a big first win for me," said Laguna Spring coach Vic "Rambo" Sanchez. "I hope we sustain this and make it to the finals."

Mayor Freddie Tinga's Taguig boys led by as many as 16 points, 45-29, in the third period, but Spring rallied behind Kalaw, Proceso and Caceres.

The Skygo/Sirilitz-backed Tribu Sugbu of Lito Gillamac led from the start in the main match of the pre-season cagefest sponsored by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Molten, Nature's Spring and Cebu's JY Discovery Mall.

Former Ozamiz Cotta gunners Melfred Sampilo and Boyet Guerrero combined for 36 points to lead Tribu, which bucked the 22-point performance of Feed Masters guard Mark Ababon.

The scores:

First Game

LAGUNA 75—Manuel 14, Caceres 13, Kalaw 13, Proceso 9, M. Reyes 7, Corbin 6, Roda 4, Alejar 4, Alminario 3, Tolentino 2, Lingal 0, Santos 0, Garcia 0, Vivero 0, Dalino 0.

TAGUIG 70—Vilar 15, De Castro 12, Robillos 8, Magsambol 6, Cruz 6, J. Reyes 5, Marucot 4, Gonzales 3, Constantino 3, Gandarosa 2, Alberto 2, De Guia 2, Nuqui 0, Zabian 0, Acion 0.

Quarters: 14-24, 29-43, 45-51, 75-70.

Second Game

TRIBU 90—Sampilo 19, Guerrero 17, Mercado 11, Paglinawan 11, Akad 8, Briones 7, Berame 5, Calo 3, Tuadles 0, Abelong 0, Esperat 0, Cabanes 0, Arda 0.

GEN. FEEDS 83—Ababon 22, Rodriguez 15, Sevilla 10, Saladaga 8, U. Reyes 7, Balague 4, Bucao 2, Clar 2, Celiz 2, Mepana 2, Elim 2, Cainglet 1, Magsumbol 0, Luga 0.

Quarters: 17-15, 45-39, 70-64, 90-83.

Benilde, San Beda booters dispute 1st round title

HOST College of St. Benilde and defending champion San Beda dispute the first round championship in the senior division of the NCAA 80th Season Football Tournament at the Philippine Navy pitch inside Fort Bonifacio, Global City, at 1:30 p.m. today.

Winner of the match will earn the first finals berth against whichever team tops the second round beginning Monday.

The SBC Red Lions won both rounds last year for the automatic championship among the senior teams. They are currently the only team with no goals scored against, having clobbered Jose Rizal University, 19-0, on opening day and Mapua Institute of Technology, 3-0, last Saturday.

In the junior division, defending champion CSB will try to avert a three-way tie going into the four-team semifinals when it meets SBC in Field 1 at 9:30 a.m.

San Beda is coming off a one-goal defeat last Thursday courtesy of Cledera Tito Jr. of second-ranked Philippine Christian University to drop the Red Cubs to third place and lift the Baby Dolphins to second spot behind CSB.

Meanwhile, Colegio de San Juan de Letran and MIT will play a 10-minute extension at 11:30 a.m. to settle the 1-1 draw of their Jan. 10 match. The teams are in the running for fourth place, the last semifinal slot in the junior division.

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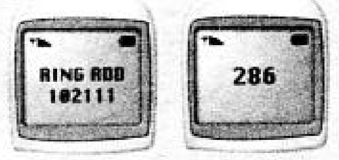

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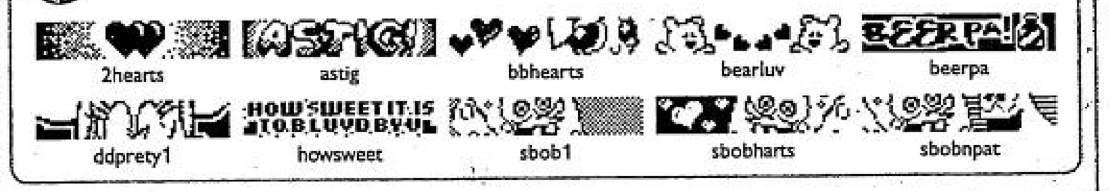

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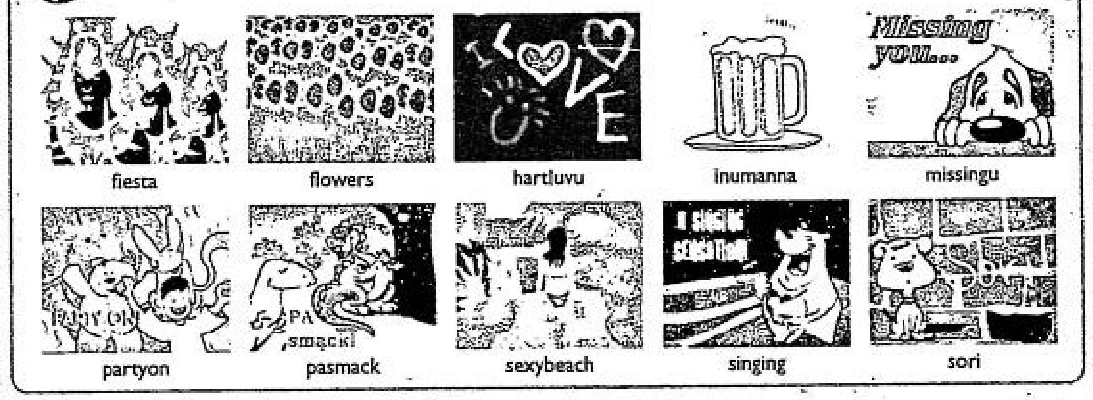

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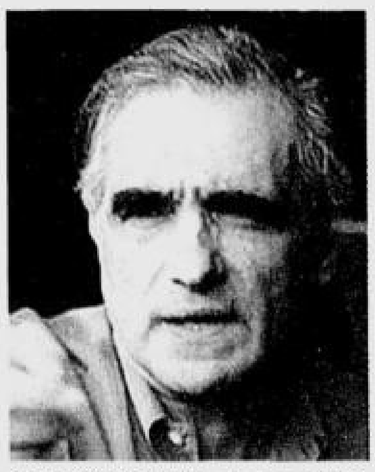
Oscar season remains a tight race

LOS ANGELES—There are few clear-cut front-runners as The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences prepares to announce nominations for the 77th Oscars on Tuesday.

With its Golden Globe win for best drama and the potential to lead the way with the most Oscar nominations, Martin Scorsese's Howard Hughes saga "The Aviator" probably will establish itself as the nominal early best-picture favorite.

CLINT Eastwood with Hilary Swank (right) in "Million Dollar Baby."



SCORSESE. Will he finally get his Best Director award?

Other film awards

Other film awards, including the Directors Guild of America prizes Jan. 29 and the Screen Actors Guild honors Feb. 5, will help sort out the leaders heading in to the Oscars on Feb. 27.

The uncertainty raises intriguing questions for movie fans who like to see Hollywood make a horse race of its awards season.

How will the probable Oscar rematch between Hilary Swank and Annette Bening play out? Will Jamie Foxx maintain the best-actor momentum he has had since the Ray Charles film biography "Ray" premiered last fall? What are the prospects for 2004's critical darling, the road-trip romance "Sideways," among academy voters, who tend to favor sober drama over comedy?

And most important, can the savvy awards-marketing machine at Miramax, which has produced the best-picture winners "Chicago," "Shakespeare in Love" and "The English Patient," finally secure an Oscar for Scorsese?

Weird practical joke

"It's been a weird practical joke that the man hasn't won," said Leonardo DiCaprio, who starred in Scorsese's "Gangs of New York," won the Golden Globe for dramatic actor as Hughes in "The Aviator" and is a likely best-actor nominee for the Oscars. "A cruel practical joke. It's like, you know, ridiculous. Enough said."

Scorsese, the man responsible for such films as "Raging Bull" and "GoodFellas," has been nominated for best director four times and best screenplay twice, while three of his films have scored best-picture nominations. But he and his films have never won. His most recent contender, "Gangs of New York," had 10 nominations but was shut out in every category.

While "The Aviator" took the top dramatic prize at the Golden Globes, Scorsese lost the directing category to Clint Eastwood for the boxing saga "Million Dollar Baby." Yet Globe voters had just named Scorsese best director two years ago for "Gangs of New York," so they may have felt it was time for another nod to Eastwood, a previous Globe winner for "Unforgiven" and "Bird."

Solid record

Eastwood and Scorsese both are nominated for the Directors Guild prize, which has a solid record at predicting what filmmaker will win the same honor come Oscar night. Only six times since 1949 has the guild winner failed to follow up with the best-director Oscar.

"Sideways" won Globes for best musical or comedy and for screenplay and is a likely contender in the best-picture race and other prominent Oscar categories. Though laced with dramatic moments, the film's comic tone will be a handicap at the Oscars, where lighter stories rarely prevail.

On the acting front, dramatic-actress Globe winner Swank for "Million Dollar Baby" faces another Oscar showdown with Bening, the Globe winner for musical or comedy for the show-business farce "Being Julia." Five years ago, underdog Swank in the low-budget "Boys Don't Cry" won the Globe dramatic honor and the best-actress Oscar over Bening, who had been the front-runner for "American Beauty."

Other potential nominees

Other potential nominees include Paul Giamatti, Thomas Haden Church and Virginia Madsen for "Sideways"; Cate Blanchett as Katharine Hepburn in "The Aviator"; Johnny Depp as playwright J.M. Barrie in "Finding Neverland"; Liam Neeson and Laura Linney for "Kinsey," the film biography of sex researcher Alfred Kinsey; Imelda Staunton for the abortion drama "Vera Drake"; and Javier Bardem for "The Sea Inside," based on the real-life story of euthanasia lobbyist Ramon Sampedro.

Foxx could snare two Oscar nominations, as lead actor for the title role in "Ray" and supporting actor for the hit-man thriller "Collateral." His eerie emulation of Charles' movements, vocal cadences and understated slyness have established Foxx as the man to beat in the best-actor category.

Record year

This could be a record year for black actors, who might grab four of the 20 acting nominations. Along with Foxx's prospective dual nominations, Don Cheadle is a likely nominee as lead actor in "Hotel Rwanda" and Morgan Freeman probably will be included in the supporting-actor field for "Million Dollar Baby."

Three times previously, black actors have earned three of the acting nominations, including the 2001 Oscars, when Denzel Washington of "Training Day" and Halle Berry of "Monster's Ball" won the lead-performer prizes.

More opportunities

Oscar analyst Tom O'Neil, author of the book "Movie Awards," said black actors have gradually gotten more opportunities to act in serious dramas.

"Morgan Freeman was amazing. Don Cheadle was amazing. Jamie Foxx had a breakout year with these two performances," O'Neil said. "It's not based on people saying, 'Oh, we're overdue to acknowledge African-American artists.' These are really powerful, performance-driven surges we're seeing." *AP*

NOW SHOWING

De Niro squares off with Streisand and Hoffman

By Rito P. Asilo

"Meet the Fockers"

D: Jay Roach
S: Ben Stiller, Robert De Niro, Barbra Streisand, Dustin Hoffman

FROM left, Hoffman, Streisand, De Niro and Danner play engaged couple's parents in Roach's hilarious film.

AFTER giving male nurse Gaylord "Greg" Focker (Ben Stiller) permission to marry his daughter Pam Byrnes (Teri Polo), conservative ex-CIA man Jack (Robert De Niro) and his wife Dina (Blythe Danner) travel with the young couple to Miami to meet Greg's parents, former lawyer Bernard (Dustin Hoffman) and sex therapist Roz (Barbra Streisand), who specializes in senior sexuality.

Meeting the future bride's parents, especially if her father happens to be De Niro, is a tricky thing. But, you know things can only get more testy if the future groom's folks turn out to be Hoffman and the great Babs!

Things get more complicated when the suspicious Jack adds two and two together after meeting the fatherless 15-year-old son of the Fockers' former housekeeper Isabel, who had a fling with Greg 15 years earlier! And it doesn't get easier when Pam discovers that she is two weeks pregnant—and the wedding date is still six months away!

Jay Roach's ("Austin Powers") follow-up to the box-office smash, "Meet the Parents" (2000), is derivative fluff, but silly fun. Despite the huge egos involved, the movie works as well as the original, with gags that range from the hilarious to the tasteless:

Jack's toilet-flushing cat conveniently finds appropriate use of its "talent" on Bernard's sex-crazy dog; the Focker couple builds a Gaylord Focker shrine in their son's honor that boasts of Greg's 10th place-"winning" efforts in school (as Bernard explains, "It's not about winning or losing; it's about passion"); a football-playing Streisand; a welcome cameo from Owen Wilson, and soup that includes a cringe-inducing "organic" ingredient.

Gathering the stellar wattage "Meet the Fockers" manages to assemble is no mean feat, and it would have been easy for the director to be overwhelmed by his stars' legendary personalities. In fact, the irrepressible, always irreverent Stiller often takes the back seat to give the old hands their comic moments.

The movie features delightful performances from the ageless Streisand, a light and bright Hoffman, and De Niro. Roach takes advantage of his impressive cast's collective experience and instincts to wing through half-baked gags that wouldn't have worked if they had involved actors with lesser celluloid charisma.

Lou Veloso makes up for lost time

By Andy Bais

WITH his political career stymied after a failed bid for a congressional seat in the last elections, versatile theater actor and television and movie comedian Lou Veloso returns to his other career, acting. This time, he vows to make up for lost time: *"Wala akong* choice, acting is now my bread and butter," he laughs.

He was forced to turn his back on acting for nine years, during which he served his three terms as Manila City councilor. *Kung may* chance *man ako umarte,* small roles *lang, kaya bitin na bitin ako. Sa* TV *naman, nakaka*-guest *nga, pero sa* talk shows *lang,*" he sighs.

VELOSO. Versatile actor-comedian loves creating characters viewers can readily empathize with.

Four plays

Now, the veteran comedian is back with a vengeance. He is currently in four theater productions to be staged early this year. *"Nakakatawa dahil puro* dramatic roles *ang na*-assign *sa akin. Pero* okey *na rin,* at least *di na ako na*-typecast as comedian," he grins.

Lou will be seen in CCP Tanghalang Pilipino's "Mass," written by F. Sionil Jose, directed by Chris Millado, with Yul Servo among his co-actors. He will also play the role of the old Ricky Davao in "Ibabaw, Ilalim," with Ces Mojica as director.

He pits acting talents with theater veterans Pen Medina and Ronnie Lazaro in "Hiblang Abo." And he also lends his acting services to "Moro," a student production at San Beda College, where he plays a *datu.*

Blind beggar

Lou's long dormant acting career surged when he appeared late last year in a brief role as a blind beggar in Laurice Guillen's acclaimed film, "Santa Santita." He made his limited presence felt, providing comic relief to an otherwise serious confessional scene with Johnny Delgado (who played a priest), which had the movie audience laughing. *"Nagulat nga rin ako dahil di naman ako nagpatawa,"* Lou beams.

Also, during last year's Palanca Awards night, Lou showed his thespic versatility once again when he portrayed four characters, complete with fast costume changes, in the excerpted presentation of Jeanne Lim's award-winning play, "Gulong." He was totally hilarious playing an old woman, a bill collector, a boy next door and a schoolboy.

"I really missed acting *kasi ito na ang naging hanapbuhay ko* for decades. Theater, specifically, has always been a part of my life. Before I went into politics, I never missed any opportunity to act, no matter how big or small the role was," Lou shares.

Love for theater

Lou's love for theater is evident in his desire to keep the performing arts alive in Sta Ana, where he resides. This is why he founded Tanghalang Sta Ana, a community-based theater group, in the early '80s.

Even if funding is hard to come by now that he's away from politics, Lou is determined to mount Tanghalang Sta Ana's annual Holy Week presentation, "Martir sa Golgota," with Alma Concepcion as Mary Magdalene, Ivy Violan as the Virgin Mary and Richard Signey as Jesus. (Call Lou at 0917 997-4788 or 589-6190).

According to Lou, his flair for comedy comes naturally. *"Kung baga, sa mukha ko pa lang, natatawa na sila.* But kidding aside, *ang* comedy *ko* is based on real-life situations. *Kasi maski ma-drama ang buhay mo, kapag nag*-heal *na ang* wound, you can laugh at your problems.

Timing

"Of course, *marami din akong natutunan* from watching other comedians. *Siguro kay* Charlie Chaplin *ko nakuha ang* timing *ko.* Among our local comedians, I consider Dolphy, Panchito, Apeng Daldal, Cachupoy and Chichay as my influences. *Ibang klase sila mag*-deliver *ng* lines," he says.

For most actors, creating a character is a difficult task, but not for Lou. He considers it his strength as an actor. "To be totally effective, *dapat ini-iba mo talaga ang sarili mo*—voice, physical appearance, costumes—*kasi* you're portraying a different person. Sadly, *yan ang kulang sa ating* current crop of comedians," he sighs.

Among our younger comedians, Lou admires Michael V: "*Magaling siya mag*-create *ng* character *at halatang pinaghirapan talaga niya.* It's obvious that he never takes his audience for granted," Lou approvingly observes.

CAYABYAB. Has set higher standards and goals for himself.

Ryan Cayabyab, the next 50 years

By Nestor U. Torre

(Continuation)

DESPITE having chalked up more achievements than many of his peers in music, theater, and related fields, Ryan Cayabyab continues to set higher standards and goals for himself in the coming years.

Ryan feels that it's time to develop new creative people in the performing arts, and "to really flood our culture with Filipino music and literature."

These are seminal statements that could serve as major guideposts for his future activities along these lines.

With the San Miguel Corp.'s Foundation for the Arts as his fulcrum, Ryan plans to hold a competition for new compositions for orchestra and chorus.

New composers

He's making it a point not to set the musical style for new composers. "That's not for me to define, it's for the young," he sagely observes. "All I can do is to provide some direction."

Ryan adds that the new compositions should be "products of their composers' life here. And they could rewrite their take on Philippine dances—for instance, a symphonic suite on the *Tinikling* or the *Maglalatik.*"

Ryan sees the need to preserve the musical products of the past, and he wants to help breathe new life into our musical culture. He sees these twin thrusts as corollary and complementary initiatives.

Dominance

Together, they could provide "a counter-movement to the local dominance of western music, brain drain, and globalization, and we could even emerge as suppliers of good world music! That's one of my dreams, that Filipinos will be tapped to compose film scores for international movies.

"Of course, I know it won't be easy. I'm fully aware of problems like our colonial mentality and the saturation of our entertainment and media by western pop culture. But the goals we've set for ourselves are so important that we have to give them everything we've got, despite the huge problems.

"Personally, I'm working on an album of Filipino love songs. And I'm conceptualizing a new musical theater piece set in the future—and in outer space! —You see? I told you, the possibilities are practically limitless!

Symphony for peace

"And my interest and involvement in religious works continues. One of my dreams is to write a symphony for peace, based on 12 peace prayers. I visualize it as a mix of classical and pop rock musical styles, and it will be very mixed-media—combining orchestra, choir, modern dance, ballet, and involving thousands of performers!

"Peace is so important to achieve, both in our country and in the world. So, our symphony for peace has to be an important work, to make a major impact on everyone's sensibilities, If it can't just yet be achieved in political terms, we can prove that it can happen in the arts!" *(To be concluded)*

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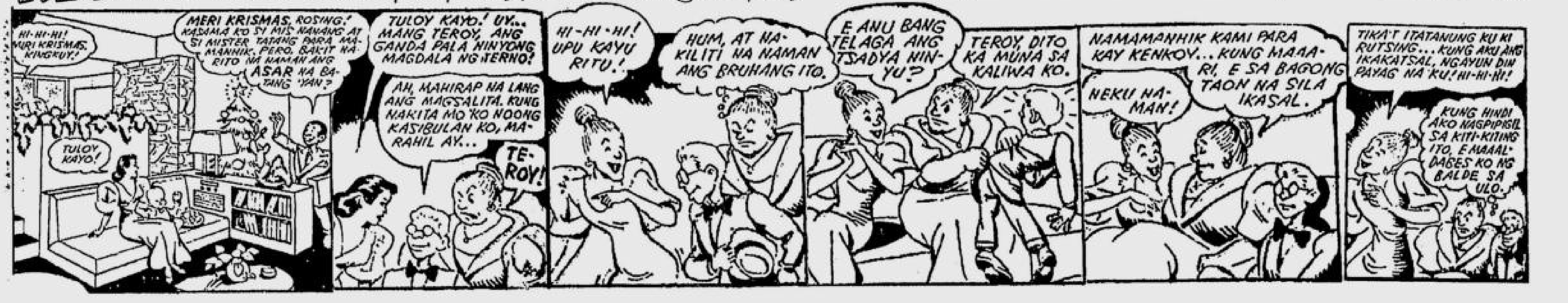
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MERI KRISMAS, ROSING! KASAMA KO SI MIS NANANG AT SI MISTER TATANG PARA MAMANHIK. PERO, BAKIT NARITO NA NAMAN ANG ASAR NA BATANG 'YAN?
TULOY KAYO!
TULOY KAYO! UY.. MANG TEROY, ANG GANDA PALA NINYONG MAGDALA NG TERNO!
AH, MAHIRAP NA LANG ANG MAGSALITA. KUNG NAKITA MO 'KO NOONG KASIBULAN KO, MARAHIL AY...
TE-ROY!
HI-HI-HI! UPU KAYU RITU!
HUM, AT NAKILITI NA NAMAN ANG BRUHANG ITO.
E ANU BANG TELAGA ANG TSADYA NINYU?
TEROY, DITO KA MUNA SA KALIWA KO.
NAMAMANHIK KAMI PARA KAY KENKOY... KUNG MAAARI, E SA BAGONG TAON NA SILA IKASAL.
NEKU NAMAN!
TIKA'T ITATANUNG KU KI RUTSING... KUNG AKU ANG IKAKATSAL, NGAYUN DIN PAYAG NA 'KU! HI-HI-HI!
KUNG HINDI AKO NAGPIPIGIL SA KITI-KITING ITO, E MAAALDABES KO NG BALDE SA ULO.

HK Arts Festival offers exceptional musical performances

By Nestor U. Torre

OUR recent teaser on the 2005 Hong Kong Arts Festival (Feb. 17 to March 20) has elicited requests for more details. We happily acquiesce:

The festival opens with the Polish National Opera's staging of Verdi's "Otello," conducted by Jacek Kaspszyk and directed by Mariusz Trelinski, with Richard Decker and Krysztof Bednarek alternating in the opera's title role. Performances on Feb. 17 and 18.

On Feb. 25 and 26, acclaimed concert pianist Leif Ove Andsnes performs with the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra. Repertoire includes concertos and symphonies by Mozart, Haydn, Schubert, Grieg and Bach.

From March 1 to 5, Frans Brüggens' Orchestra of the 18th Century will perform all nine of Beethoven's symphonies, in four sequential concerts that comprise the outstanding classical musical event in Hong Kong for 2005.

"OTELLO." Verdi's masterwork will be staged by the Polish National Opera.

VIOLINIST Regina Carter and her quintet will perform on March 10 and 11.

Soprano

Feb. 18, the Frieburg Baroque Orchestra, featuring soprano Veronica Cangemi, will perform pieces by Handel, Bach and Telemann.

On Feb. 24, tenor Wei Song, dubbed as China's Pavarotti, will be featured in a concert with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra.

On March 1, the Brazilian Guitar Quartet performs works by Bach and Albéniz, and Brazilian classics by Nepomuceno, Miranda, Guarnieri and Mignone.

On March 9, the Mozart Requiem will be performed by the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and the Gelbenkian Choir.

On March 16, the Ensemble Antipodes plays modern classics and new works by Chinese composers Melissa Hui and Wang Xi-Lin.

On March 12, the French chamber group, Ysaÿe Quartet, performs string quartets by Debussy, Jadin and Fauré.

Turkish pianist

On Feb. 19 and 20, Turkish pianist Fazil Say is featured in a recital of works by Scarlatti, Mozart, Gershwin, Haydn, Ranel and Liszt.

On March 14, pianist Rachel Cheung plays pieces by Chopin, Bach, Prokofiev, Haydn, Liszt, and Fauré.

On March 9 and 10, the Russian Orthodox Choir will sing Gregorian chants from the ninth to 11th centuries, and Easter prayers from the 18th and 19th centuries.

On March 10 and 11, violinist Regina Carter and her quintet will demonstrate their sophisticated techniques through a rich mixture of standard and Latin jazz, ballads and classical compositions.

On March 17 and 18, Conga King Poncho Sanchez and his Latin Jazz Band will perform their signature hits in their trademark hand-drumming style, conga solos and smouldering vocals.

On Feb. 25 and 26, All That Shanghai Jazz performs evocative popular ballads and dance music from the 1930s to the 1960s, contrasted with the fresher sound of today's music.

On Feb. 22, the Brad Mehldau trio performs jazz standards, pop kitsch and hip originals.

And on March 7, the Blind Boys of Alabama perform inspirational Gospel songs and "gospelized" contemporary songs. *(Next: Theater works)*

Optimism rules in the recording industry for 2005

By Remy M. Umerez

A GENERAL prediction rules that 2005 will be a better year for the recording industry.

PARI president Tony Ocampo observes: "We know the problems plaguing the recording scene. We are determined to solve them by adopting measures to fight piracy. We have to constantly remind buyers that patronizing pirated products is just like stealing. We will be more aggressive, and we hope the government will do the same."

Brisk business

Speaking on behalf of his record company, Ocampo says that Ivory Music and Video showed signs of brisk business toward the last quarter of 2004, but it slowed down during Christmastime.

He bares the company's first quarter plans for 2005, which includes full-blast promotions for "Special Memory" the debut album of Troy Montero. Only a thousand pieces were released in the market last month to create awareness.

Before Troy left for the United States to join his family for the Yuletide season, Ivory made sure that the music video of "Special Memory" was completed. It was shot in the exclusive Southridge subdivision in Tagaytay against the backdrop of picturesque hillsides and winding roads.

Ivory believes that "Special Memory" is bound for success because Filipino record buyers prefer sentimental ballads. And, who knew that beneath Troy's hunky exterior lay a soothing voice? The album offers timeless ballads like "All My Life," "If You Leave Me Now," "Anything For You," "You Take My Breath Away" and "My Eyes Adored You."

Sentimental remake

Another sentimental remake, Eric Clapton's "Tears in Heaven," has been Eric Santos' chosen album carrier track in "Iniwan." Since its release two months ago, the album has remained in the Top 10 of local music charts.

Ocampo expects both albums to reach their peak in February, in time for Valentine.

Another first in the history of Ivory is the launch of the acoustic album of MYMP—Juris and Chin, which is part of a trilogy. The duo has waxed 12 of the most requested songs in their gigs.

In mid-March, Ivory will introduce a new rock group, Nerveline. Soloist Gian Carlo Sotto is the son of Helen Gamboa and Tito Sotto.

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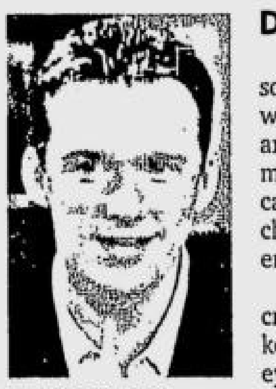
MONTAGE

Enchanted evening with Russell Watson

BRITISH opera superstar Russell Watson will perform at the PICC Plenary Hall on Feb. 10. He will be joined by famous British conductor Sir William Hayward, who will conduct the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra and San Miguel Master Chorale.


WATSON. UK opera sensation.

Watson was among the first European artists to answer the call for relief aid in the recent Asian tsunami tragedy. Together with Sir Cliff Richard, Boy George and Ronan Keating, he recorded a benefit song for the tsunami victims, "Grief Never Grows Old."

The UK opera sensation was the first British male singer to simultaneously take the No. 1 spot in both the US and UK classical charts. He has garnered numerous awards, like Album of the Year, and Best Selling Classical Album in the UK.

His latest album, "Amore e Musica," offers a wide range of songs, from the melodramatic "Gladiatore" to the rousing "You Raise Me Up." Call 891-9999.

Sterling Campus Idol

JUDY Ann Manalang of Manila Central University High School shines in on-campus auditions.

After 15 on-campus auditions, the Sterling Campus Idol talent search has discovered some 60 promising student talents. Another audition has been lined up on Feb. 26 at Star City at the CCP complex.

Categories are for solo singer and hip-hop dance group, high school and college levels. Call 886-4407 for details.

The televised grand finals will be held at Aliw Theater this March. At stake are P100,000 for each Singing Idol and Hip-Hop Group Idol, P30,000 for the first runner-up and P20,000 for the second runner-up in each category.

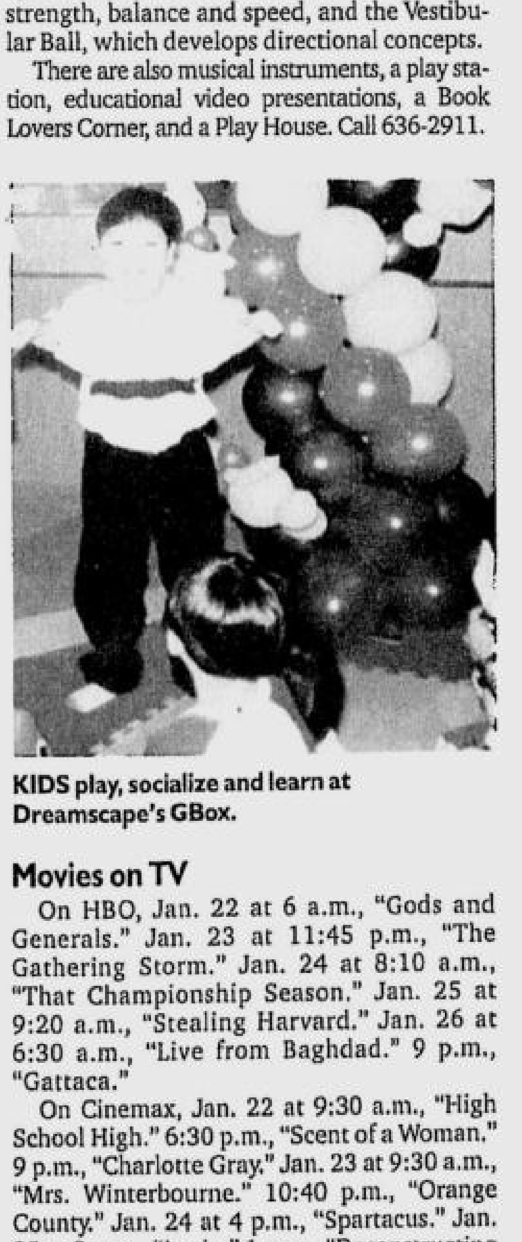
Sterling Campus Idol is presented by Sterling Notebook, Avanti Ballpen and Pentel Writing Instruments. It is produced by DL Media Focus Int'l., with Pat Perez as overall creative director.

Dreamscape's GBox

Dreamscape at the fourth level of Robinsons Galleria aims to help in parenting tasks with its soon-to-open GBox, a kiddie activity and play area. Scheduled to open this summer, GBox is a modern and convenient childcare center, a safe and nurturing place where children can play, socialize and learn. It is operated by Gbox Amusement Corp.

Amenities include a Bridge Tunnel for crawling, climbing and slide balancing; a Basketball Ring for enhancing motor skills and eye coordination; Riding Toys that promote strength, balance and speed, and the Vestibular Ball, which develops directional concepts.

There are also musical instruments, a play station, educational video presentations, a Book Lovers Corner, and a Play House. Call 636-2911.


KIDS play, socialize and learn at Dreamscape's GBox.

Movies on TV

On HBO, Jan. 22 at 6 a.m., "Gods and Generals." Jan. 23 at 11:45 p.m., "The Gathering Storm." Jan. 24 at 8:10 a.m., "That Championship Season." Jan. 25 at 9:20 a.m., "Stealing Harvard." Jan. 26 at 6:30 a.m., "Live from Baghdad." 9 p.m., "Gattaca."

On Cinemax, Jan. 22 at 9:30 a.m., "High School High." 6:30 p.m., "Scent of a Woman." 9 p.m., "Charlotte Gray." Jan. 23 at 9:30 a.m., "Mrs. Winterbourne." 10:40 p.m., "Orange County." Jan. 24 at 4 p.m., "Spartacus." Jan. 25 at 9 p.m., "Anzio." 1 p.m., "Deconstructing Sarah." Jan. 26 at 9:30 a.m., "And the Band Played On."

ENCHANTED/ A2-7

Pido's 'Bittersweet' album is mature and sophisticated

By Noelani Torre

IF you think that the rage for all things acoustic is over, think again. Pido Lalimarmo, via his solo debut "Bittersweet," is here to show you that it's still hanging on. Though not technically an acoustic recording (this is a studio album), his latest compilation nevertheless manages to sound acoustic-ish with its pared-down production and guitar-driven sound.

Pido has been making music for more than a decade now. In case you've forgotten, he was one of Side A's original members in the late '80s before he broke away from the group in order to form the band, Artstart. If you haven't heard of it, that's because it didn't exactly have a long run, though they did manage to come up with something approaching a hit—"Danielle"—before its members went their separate ways.

Side A went on to become ultra-successful and Pido sort of faded into the woodwork after that. He didn't lie low for long, however. When the acoustic scene became more active a few years back, we started hearing his name again, coupled with that of the band Take One.

10-track collection

Now, after being a band member for years, Pido has decided to take off on his own. "Bittersweet," released by Warner Music and Acoustic Gold Productions (the guys responsible for giving us Paolo Santos), is a 12-track collection of mellow, sentimental music that is as laid-back as any album can possibly get.

Produced by Pido himself, the record has several musical luminaries gracing its songs with their presence, like Tots Tolentino, Mike Luis, Mar Dizon, Side A's Joey Benin, Jay Durias and Tata Balane of South Border, Wendell Garcia and Rommel de la Cruz of Barbie's Cradle, Freestyle's Nikki Cabardo, and Paolo Santos.

Pido credits Santos for inspiring his songwriting. "*Ang tagal ko nang hindi sumusulat, mga* seven years," he said. "After we started jamming, I got to hear his new songs. As a songwriter, Paolo really inspired me to write again."

Backup vocals

Santos also put in his own bit of songwriting and singing. He wrote "Ice Cube" (Track 2), contributed the lyrics for "Unexpectedly" (Track 10), and did backup vocals for a number of songs.

There are no jarring notes in this easygoing record, and the studio production was kept to a minimum. There's nothing here that distracts us from Pido's smooth-as-silk voice and his soft yet confident strumming. Nothing, that is, except for the songs themselves.

Perhaps we're quibbling, but we got really distracted when we heard lines like "frozen ice cube" (um, isn't it understood that ice cubes are frozen?), "message coming from the tip of your tongue" (laughable and unwieldy), "three squeezes in my hand" (grammar, please), and so on. We had to listen to the entire record several times before we could concentrate on the songs' other aspects.

Husky edge

Ah well, Pido has a good voice at least—not as high as Santos' (which means it doesn't grate after 10 minutes), and with a husky edge that makes it sound more solid. He also has great talents backing him up. We particularly enjoyed the jazzy sax portions in "Unexpectedly" (Rancis De Leon) and "I Missed My Train" (Tots Tolentino).

This is a mature and sophisticated album, all in all. Pido obviously knows what he's doing and where he's going, so he keeps things unified. All he needs now is a good lyric editor.

LALIMARMO. Guitar-driven sound.

Hoobastank more aggressive in sophomore release

By Mary Ann A. Bautista

HOOBASTANK. Broader palette of songs, moods and emotions.

THE BAND has an unusual name, but the four guys of Hoobastank are surprisingly normal guys leading normal lives. They share their fans' sense of humor. Hoobastank—guitarist Dan Estrin, bassist Markku Lappalainen, drummer Chris Hesse and singer Doug Robb—has the ability to speak for their fans.

"When we're on tour and pull up somewhere, we're wearing shorts and flip-flops—we look like average Joes," Robb says. "We don't take ourselves too seriously, and we're not afraid to make fun of ourselves.

Ordinary things

"When we talk to kids who watch our shows, we about ordinary things. It's not fans talking to rock stars."

OK, they're not completely normal, everyday guys. Their first album went platinum thanks to the hit singles "Crawling in the Dark" and "Running Away," and they do work their asses off to get their breaks. But, their second album, "The Reason," shows that they're songwriters of uncommon talent, with a broader palette of songs, moods, and emotions than their self-titled debut.

The album's first single, "Out of Control," presents the more aggressive side of the quartet. It was the last song the band recorded for the disc, and was written after they thought they were finished. The track touches on a common theme for the album.

"Some songs are about religion and my complete lack of interest in it," say Robb. But, the album is not all about religion.

"Out of Control" is about opening your eyes after being blinded by devotion. It could also be about the person who devotes his life to his job and ends up feeling lost and, well, out of control.

Blast

There's plenty of hard-ass rock on "The Reason," from the torrential guitar and lofty hooks of "Just One," to the blast of "Same Direction," to the near-epic "Disappear." There's a lot of tracks to rock to.

As for its softer side, there's the sweeping grandeur of the title track, which features a circular guitar arpeggio, and Robb's scaring vocal line— an apology *cum* love song, something that they don't make too many of these days.

REIVEN BULADO

Reluctant star from Suba

By Behn Cervantes

NORMA Japitana and I landed in sunny Bohol just before noon after a mere hour's flight from Manila. Ironically, we had left Manila at the height of a storm. While Metro Manila was dark, grey and muddy, the beautiful tropical island was glorious with sun and surf, so we were ecstatic about arriving in Tagbilaran. Norma J had invited me to watch the last shooting days of "Panaghoy Sa Suba," Cesar Montano's paean to the Loboc River and his beloved Bohol.

With the help of scriptwriter Cris Vertido, Cesar was producing a movie in *Bisaya*, hoping to revive the Visayan movie industry, as well as to give national and international exposure to the Visayans' distinct culture. The dialogue would predominantly be in *Bisaya* with English subtitles.

Local talents

Cesar naturally chose Visayan actors for the movie, tapping local talents like Rebecca Lusterio and Warfe Engracia, aside from well-known Cebuana Caridad Sanchez and Japanese actor Jackie Woo for his significant entry to the 2004 Manila Film Festival. Montano, Woo and leading lady Juliana Palermo, a native of Davao, would be joined by Ilonggo actors Joel Torre and Ronnie Lazaro. Only multi-awarded actress Daria Ramirez was a *Tagala*.

Naturally, Cesar wanted to use Visayan talents in his film. Rebecca was discovered three years ago by director Marilou Diaz-Abaya for "Muro Ami." She portrayed a young girl who passed herself off as a boy in that fine film, and won awards for her sensitive portrayal.

Warfe, on the other hand had acted with Mat Ranillo and Gloria Sevilla when the duo was still producing films. Visayan film fans spread out all over the Visayas and Mindanao. This vehicle would be a comeback of sorts for multi-talented Warfe, who also sings, writes and hosts a radio talk show in his native Cebu.

Significant role

The script demanded a younger actor who would have a short but significant role in the movie. Cesar auditioned young talents in Bohol and Cebu, and an erstwhile ramp model and San Jose de Recolletos 3rd Year BS Biology student named Reiven Bulado was chosen for the part of Cesar's younger brother.

When Norma J pointed Reiven out to me, I agreed that he was a fine choice, because he was good-looking, dark-eyed and rather tall. More importantly, he had Montano's signature intensity. Later, Norma J and Cesar expressed their satisfaction with his acting in the rushes they had previewed.

However, in the first press

RELUCTANT/ A2-6

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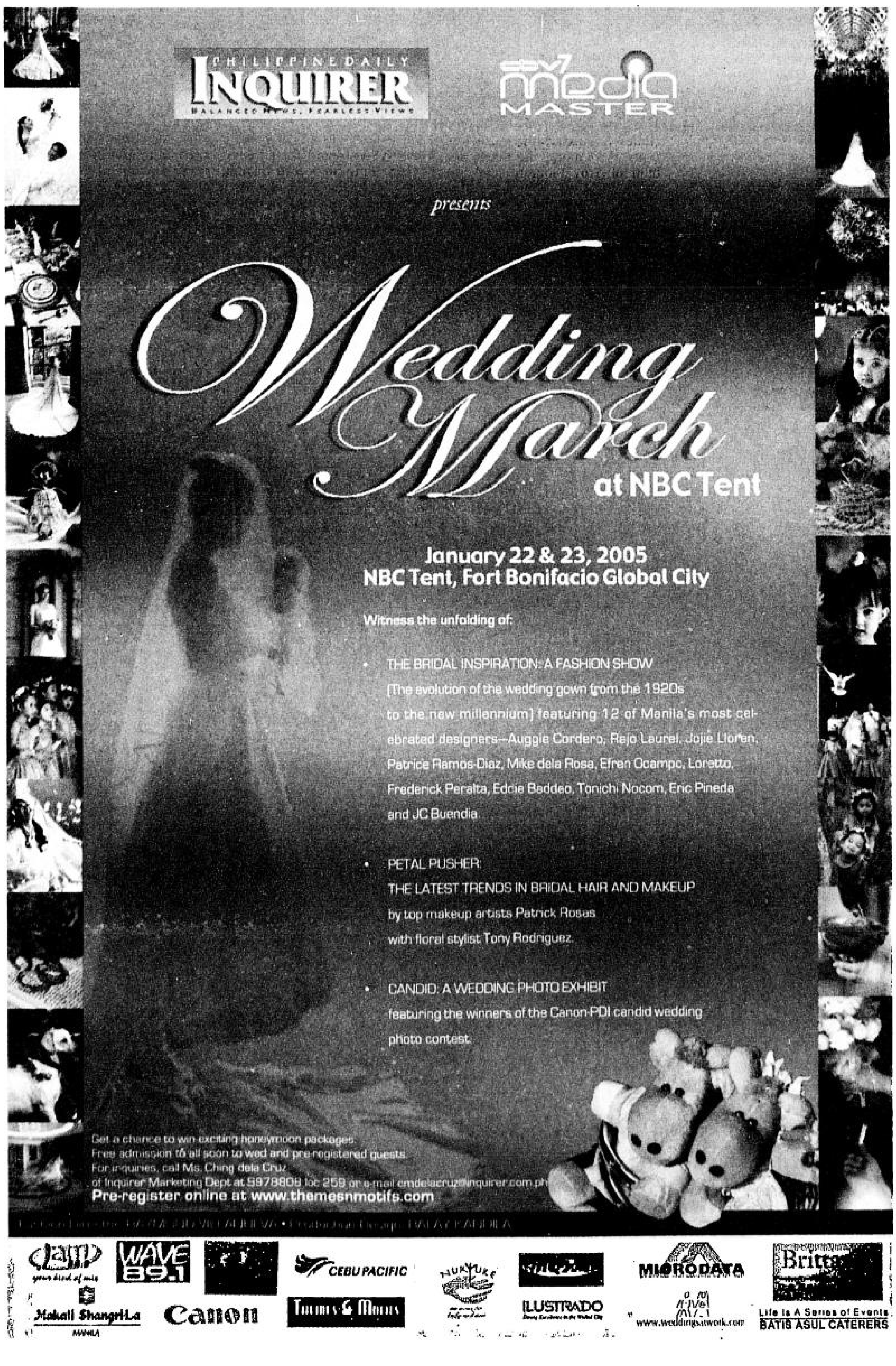
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Sequels strike gold at the box office

LONDON—Coming soon to a cinema near you: "Return of the Sequel." The box office success of movie sequels over the past few years has Hollywood sticking to the formula and banking on a fresh wave of them for 2005, with new episodes in the "Star Wars," "Batman" and "Harry Potter" series on their way.

"STAR WARS." Highest-grossing series of films in the US, with its five installments raking in $1.4 billion.

The relative financial success of sequels lately has had cinema owners reaching for the number "2" and the word "return" more often than ever for their marquees.

Of the $20 billion earned by films and their sequels at the US box office from 1980, 38 percent came from the first in the series and 36 percent from the first sequel, indicating that sequels perform on a par at the box office with the original, according to research published on Monday by Screen Digest.

Studios issued a record number of 15 sequels in 2002, and 14 each in 2003 and 2004, and they have been rushing the second and third installments to screens more quickly.

Average lag

Screen Digest found that the average lag between sequels was three years between 1980 and 2004, but in more recent years the gap has fallen to about a year.

Though the research focuses on US box office success, sequels dominated screens around the world last year as audiences turned to the comfort of their favorite characters.

In the UK alone, four sequels—"Shrek 2," "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban," "Bridget Jones—The Edge of Reason," and "Spider-Man 2" topped the list of the five highest-grossing films. Only "The Incredibles" at No. 4 was not part of a series.

"Movie sequels have been a key driver of recent sustained box office growth, with some of the highest grossing titles part of a franchise," Screen Digest analyst David Hancock said.

Common complaint

The success of recent sequels is owed to scripts that don't always simply retell the same story in the same way the original did, a common complaint among moviegoers.

"'Lord of the Rings,' 'Harry Potter,' 'Star Wars,' 'Spiderman' and 'Shrek' are all examples of how creatively strong a sequel can be, proving that it is no longer a cynical option but a clever marketing strategy to build on a good idea and an audience base rather than exploit it," Hannock said.

The highest-grossing series of films in the United States is "Star Wars," with the five films raking in $1.4 billion, according to Screen Digest, with the three-part "Lord of the Rings" the only other series to top the $1 billion mark.

The "Spider-Man" series, however, has earned the highest per film average on US screens, $376 million for its two titles, and "Shrek" is second with an average of $351 million.

Action films

Action films dominate the world of sequels with 51 movies or nearly three out of every 10 over the last quarter century, Screen Digest found. Comedy (18 percent), horror (16 percent) and sci-fi (14 percent) are the next most popular genres.

SEQUELS/ A2-5

Viva presents singing stars of the '80s

By Remy M. Umerez

VINCENT del Rosario is pleased to announce that Viva Entertainment is producing two big Valentine shows to be held at the Araneta Coliseum—"Ladies of the '80s" and "Motown's Greatest Hits in Concert."

Three of the hottest singers of the '80s are featured in "Ladies of the '80s": Scottish-born singer Sheena Easton and pop artists Taylor Dayne and Tiffany.

EASTON. Has remained a top concert attraction around the world.

Theme

Sheena is best remembered for singing "For Your Eyes Only," the theme of the James Bond movie with the same title. Two of her biggest hits, "Almost Over You" and the pop anthem "Telephone" (Long Distance Love Affair), went gold and platinum in the United States, Europe and Asia.

Sheena has remained a top concert attraction around the world having performed in the US, UK, Canada, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Singapore and Taipei.

Debut album

The debut album of Taylor Dayne for Arista in 1988 produced the global hit "Tell It To My Heart" and the album went on to sell over two million copies in the USA. Her massive hits include "Prove Your Love" and "Love Will Lead You Back." She has made her mark in the field of pop, dance, rock and adult contemporary formats.

Tiffany was only 13 when she signed an MCA contract. Her hit single "I Think We're Alone" hit the six million mark in the US and sold over 14 million records worldwide. Her second album, "Hold An Old Friend's Hand," went double platinum.

"Ladies of the '80s" will be staged on Feb. 11 and 12 at the Araneta Coliseum, and on Feb. 14 at the Waterfront Hotel, Cebu.

Motown classics

Meanwhile, the Motown sound defined the music of the '60s and '70s. Some of the Motown classic hits are: "Baby Love," "Stop in the Name of Love," "The Love Machine," "The Way You Do The

VIVA/ A2-5

From dropout to standout

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

YOUNG entrepreneur Mike Tiaoqui's life is consumed by the drive to create new, innovative companies. Only in his early 20s, he already owns and operates a realty company, a restaurant-bar, a family steakhouse, and a franchised branch of a Chinese fastfood. As if these were not enough, he recently opened a culinary school, the Academy for International Culinary Arts (AICA).

"Research shows that by 2010, more than 20 percent of the population will be under 20 years old," he says. "So, the future is in education."

He knows whereof he speaks, because much of what he has achieved today was made possible by his knack for finding the right school.

TIAOQUI. Innovative young entrepreneur.

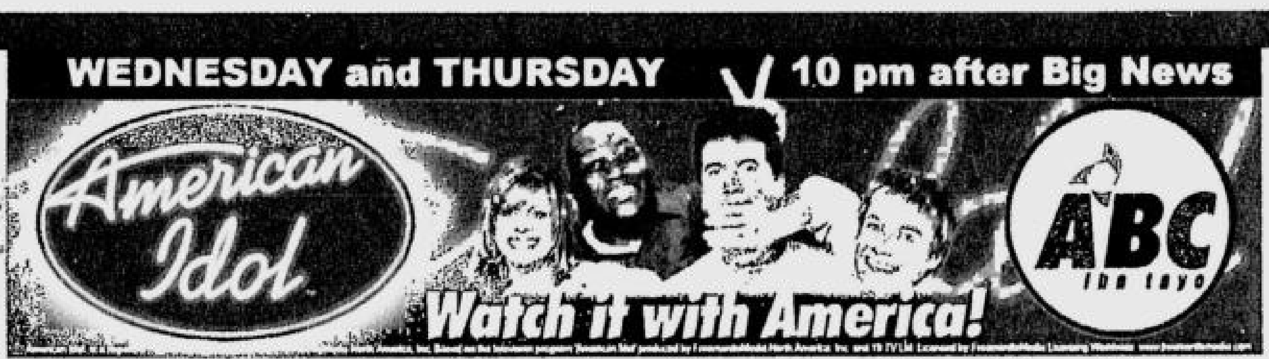
One would think that someone this successful has always walked the straight path. It was not quite the case for Mike. "I just wasn't made for traditional education," he muses.

FROM/ A2-5

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Saturday, January 22, 2005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ABS-CBN 2	Ek Channel		Y Speak		Nginig The Hidden Files		TBA		TV Patrol	Magandang Gabi Bayan		Star Cinema Presents			Home Along The Airport		Kontrobersyal		Sports Unlimited
NBN	Value Vision		Value Vision					Collegiate Champions League		Yan Ang Pinoy		Search For The 1st Tanduay Billiards Player		Mosconi Cup 2004					
ABC 5	Smart TV	The Basketball Show		Soccer Showdown		Loren		Dealsahan		Dyesebel				Sing Galing		Maverick & Ariel	Gabi Na Kumander		
GMA 7	Startalk			Wish Ko Lang	Wag Kukurap (4:45 PM)		Pinoy Pop Superstar		Bitoy's Funniest Videos		Extra Challenge	Imbestigador (8:15 PM)			Idol Ko Si Kap			Game Face In Concert	
RPN 9		Biyaheng Langit	Bayan I-Text Mo Raisbo		Kids TV	Hanapbuhay Overseas		Isumbong mo kay Tulfo		7 Days		JAG		Moll Flanders					
IBC 13		Home Shopping Network		Global Family Songs		Home Shopping Network		Amerika Atbp.		V League				Bitag		In This Corner		Ugnayang Pambansa	
Solar	Tough Enough	WWE Bottomline		Wwe Raw				Wwe Heat		Wow		Slamball		UFC Recall				Thunder Box	
Nickelodeon	Double Decker				Sabrina The Teenage Witch	Romeo	Girls In Love	My Dad The Rock Star	Drake & Josh	My Life As A Teenage Robot	SpongeBob SquarePants	Danny Phantom	All Grown Up	Double Decker				The Ren & Stimpy Show	The Wild Thornberrys
MYX		Urban MYX	MYX Backtrax	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Presents		Top Of The Pops	MYX Remakes	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	Club MYX	Take 5	OPM MYX		MYX Level	
ETC		Dateline		The Today Show		Saturday Night Live		NBC Nightly News	Knock First	One Tree Hill		Queer Eye For A Straight Guy		Saturday Night Live		Tonight Show With Jay Leno		Blind Date	Fifth Wheel
Cinema One	Kiss Mo Ko				Spirit Warriors				My Movie				Oras Oras Araw Araw				Friends & Lovers		
Studio 23								Sports TV	Game Plan	7th Heaven	Boston Public	Gilmore Girls			Studio 23 Present				Reel Deal
AXN		The Big Hit				Global Adventure		WRC 2005: Rally XS	Rated X	30 Seconds To Fame	30 Seconds To Fame	Ripley's Believe It or Not		Alias		Money Train			
Star World	Action Man	Totally Outrageous Behavior Caught On Tape	When Hidden Cameras Attack	Miami Vice		Adventure Inc		Roswell		Dark Angel		TNA Wrestling/ One Night Only/ Rod Stewart In Concert		When Good Pets Go Bad 1/ Saturday Shockumentaries		Coupling/ Dog The Bounty Hunter	Absolute Power/ Cops	The Kumars At No. 42	Goodness Gracious Me
CNN	Diplomatic License	World News	World Business This Week	World News	People In The News	Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	World News	Global Office	World News	Design 360	World News	Talk Asia	World News	The Daily Show John Stewart Global Edition	World News	World Sport
National Geographic	On Assignment	Big Bite Night				Wild Life Adventure		Creature Feature				Saturday Unlimited				Big Bite Night			
Solar Sports		KOTV Classics		GWS ep.56	Copenhagen Masters MS Final			Vintage NBA: Bill Bradley		Greatest Classics				NBA Game San Antonio @ Phoenix	NBA TV Daily				NBA Action
Lifestyle Network	Carol Duvall	HGTV Special		Radical Sabbatical	Road & Track	Genuine Article	Food Fight	Date Plate	Emeril Live		Nigella Bites	Brini Maxwell Show	Royalty A-Z		Modern Girl's Guide	E! True Hollywood Story		Look For Less	Behind The Velvet Ropes
HBO	The Foreigner			Star Trek Nemesis				Encrypt			Fair Game			Gigli				Cradle 2 The Grave	
Star Movies			Ravenous (3:45 PM)				Corto Maltese			Santa Clause 2 (7:15 PM)				Die Another Day				Holy Man (11:15PM)	
Cartoon Network		The Detective Squad	Tom & Jerry Show	Swat Kats	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	X-Men Evolution	Justice League	Atomic Betty	Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends	Xiaolin Showdown	Batman Beyond: The Return Of The Joker		The Looney Tunes Show	Cartoon Cartoon Show	Power Rangers Wild Force	Zoids: Fuzors	Time Squad	Harvey Birdman (11:15PM)	Justice League
ESPN	Eng. Premier League Preview	World Pool Masters '04 Ann Zon, Holland		Big 10 Conf. Iowa vs Illinois				AFC Divisional Playoff						NBA Game Memphis Grizzlies vs Nuggets			World Pool Masters '04 Ann Zon, Holland		
Disney Channel	Potatoes And Dragons	Sabrina's Secret Life	The Legend Of Tarzan	Wicked Science	Viva S Club	Martin Mystery/ That's So Raven/ Dave The Barbarian/Phil Of The Future				Lizzie Mcguire	Wonderful World Of Disney			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	According To Jim	America's Funniest Home Video	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Cinemax	Internal Affairs (2:45 PM)				Cinema Secrets III Ep 8 When Fantasy Becomes Reality	Hercules And The Amazon Women			Scent Of A Woman					Charlotte Gray				The People Vs. Larry Flynt	
Hallmark Channel		Book Of Ruth				The King and Queen Of Moonlight Bay				Out Of Order				Choosing Matthias			Midsomer Murders: Blue Herring		
Discovery Channel		Human Discovery		Ultimate Cars	Building The Ultimate	Unsolved History				Wild Discovery				Rides		Human Senses		Extreme Discovery	
MTV Philippines		Non-Stop Hits		One Bad Trip	Cribs	MTV Rock'd	Globally Dismissed	MTV Upgraded	Non-Stop Hits	MTV Screen	MTV Urban Beats	Spring Break	Mota:	MTV Diyes		Non-Stop Hits		VH1 Hits/ Video Collection	
Sports Plus			Golf Globe 2001	Acc Basketball Georgia Tch @ Nrth Carolina					Porsche md 7&8	Monster Jam		Freestyle Motorcross		Nopi Tunerversion	Bikini Destination	Golf Int'l	Mastercard C'ships 1st rd.		
EWTN	Defending Life	Angelus (3:15PM)	G.K. Chesterton	My Little Angels	The Donut Man	The Holy Rosary With Mother Angelica and the Nuns Of Our Lady Of Angels Monastery	Black And Roman Catholic	Catholic Compass		The World Over		Fr. John Corapi		Daily Mass		Angelus (10:15PM)	The Church And Culture Today	Life on The Rock Encore	

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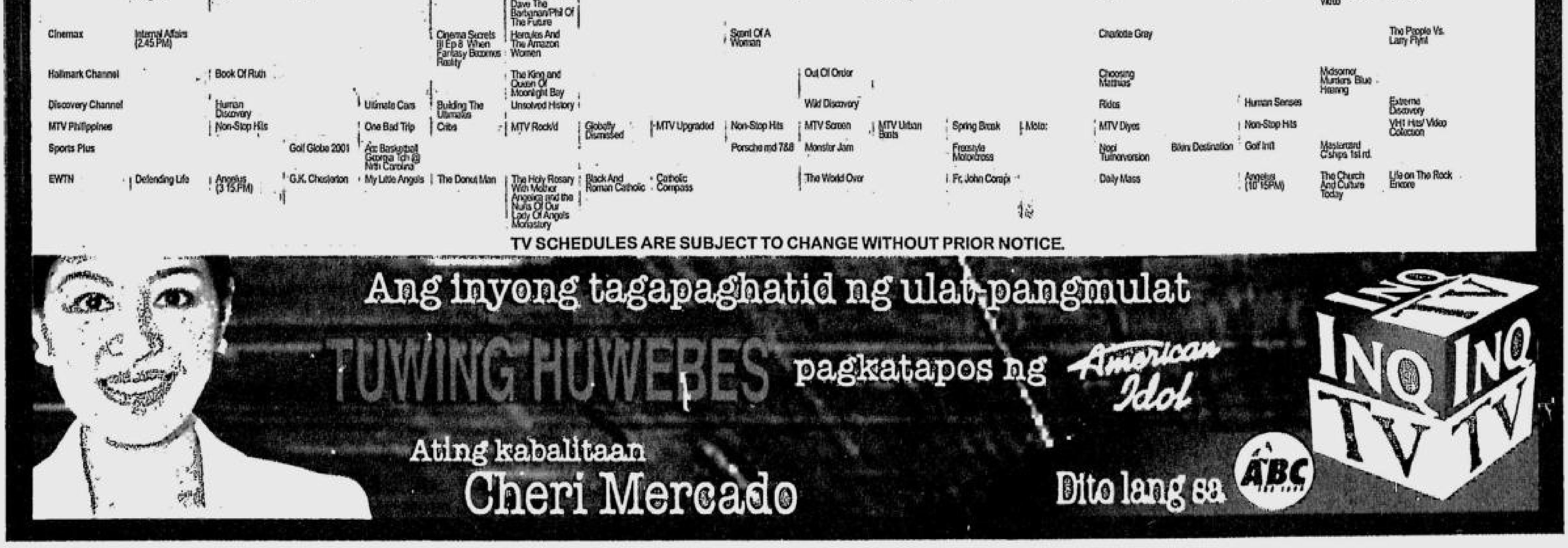
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TUWING HUWEBES pagkatapos ng American Idol
Ating kabalitaan
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Sequels strike . . .

From page A2-4

The firm also found that May, June and July account for about half of all sequel releases.

The longest-running series, since 1980, is "Friday the 13th" with 11 installments, and $309 million of total gross proceeds.

Excluded from the study—which only accounts for films first released in 1980—is Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's James Bond and Pink Panther franchises, as well as such popular film series as "The Godfather," "Mad Max," "Jaws," "Halloween," "Airplane" and "Superman." *AP*

"SPIDER-MAN." Has earned $376 million for its two titles.

Viva . . .

From page A2-4

Things You Do," "My Girl" and "Get Ready."

"Greatest Hits of Motown" is a grandiose production that runs on Feb. 13 and 14 at the Araneta Coliseum. It will feature The Sounds of the Supremes, Ollie Woodson and the Temptations Review, The Miracles and Junior Walker, and the All Stars Band.

The show will also feature some of the original members of these great musical institutions. Not to be missed by nostalgia buffs!

From . . .

From page A2-4

Diploma

He changed schools at least three times in high school, until he finally got his diploma in Baltimore, Maryland.

In college, he got into a Manila university on a soccer scholarship but found himself unhappy again. He had practically given up on education. Although he was interested in learning, none of the schools he attended were able to motivate him to study.

That was until he found the Centre for International Education (CIE) and soon realized it was a school unlike any other. First, it was an International Associate Partner of the University of Cambridge. The diplomas came straight from Cambridge, which also provided a curriculum that is based on mentoring.

Core group

Forming the core group behind CIE are successful entrepreneurs who provide much of the mentoring themselves: Prof. Nelia Cruz-Sarcol, Prof. Andy Ferreria, former dean of the Asian Institute of Entrepreneurship at AIM; Francisco Colayco, author of the best-selling business book "Wealth Within Your Reach," and his wife, Mary Anne Colayco, as well as flourishing young entrepreneurs Cheese Ledesma and her brother Lex Ledesma.

Practical knowledge

According to Mike, CIE taught him the practical knowledge he needed to build his business. "They didn't teach me to just memorize facts, they taught me about life. With the proper guidance, you *can* make anything happen!"

Call the Centre for International Education at 887-2828 and 887-5989.)

Contact Mandy Navasero PR for Special Projects 8991767* 896-3208 *CP:0916-706-0130 E-mail mandy-navasero@photo-pro.com.ph

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2 UNO
3 (DTS) ONE MISSED CALL
4 GALING GALING MO BABES
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2 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
3 (DTS ES) OCEAN'S TWELVE
4 AFTER THE SUNSET

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2 BLADE TRINITY
3 (DOLBY) WHITE NOISE
4 (DTS) AFTER THE SUNSET

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2 HELLWOLF
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THX 1 MEET THE FOCKERS	1 WHITE NOISE	1 OCEAN'S 12	1 WHITE NOISE 12:50, 3:00, 5:10, 7:20, 9:30	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 MEET THE FOCKERS 1 20 3 50 6 20, 8 50, 11 20	1 WHITE NOISE
2 OCEAN'S 12	2 MEET THE FOCKERS	2 WHITE NOISE	2 MEET THE FOCKERS 11 40 2 10, 4 40 7 10 9 40	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 MEET THE FOCKERS 3 00, 5 30 8 00 10 30	2 KUNG FU HUSTLE
3 WHITE NOISE	3 BLADE: TRINITY	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 MEET THE FOCKERS 11 50 2 20, 4 50, [illegible]		GUARANTEED SEATS 3 OCEAN'S 12 1 30 4 00 6 30, 9 00, 11 30	3 NED KELLY
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5 MEET THE FOCKERS		5 KUNG FU HUSTLE		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 WHITE NOISE 2 35, 4 45 [illegible]	5
		6 MEET THE FOCKERS			
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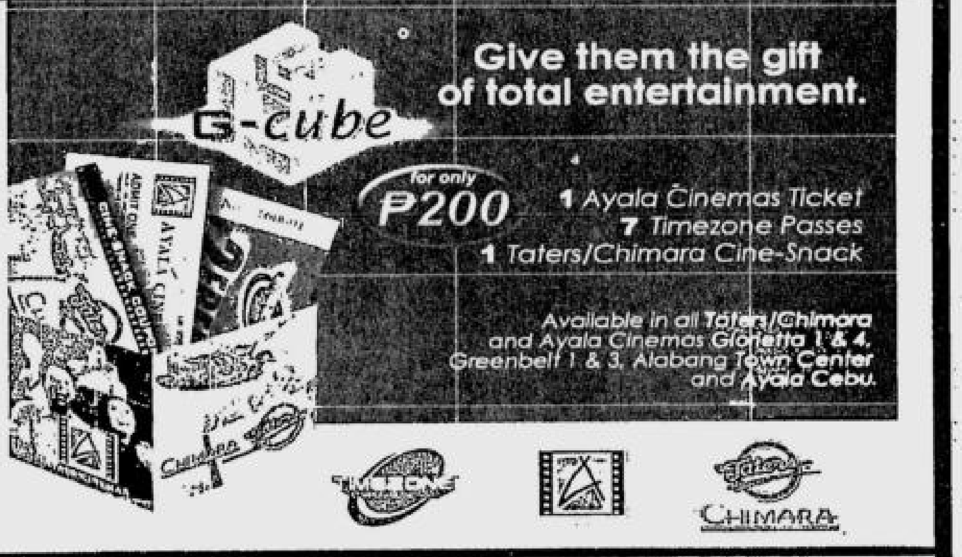

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LoveMall!

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AYALA CENTER
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LoveMall!

Reluctant

From page A2-3

conference held in Manila after the film was finished, Reiven was rather shy and had to be prodded to speak up.

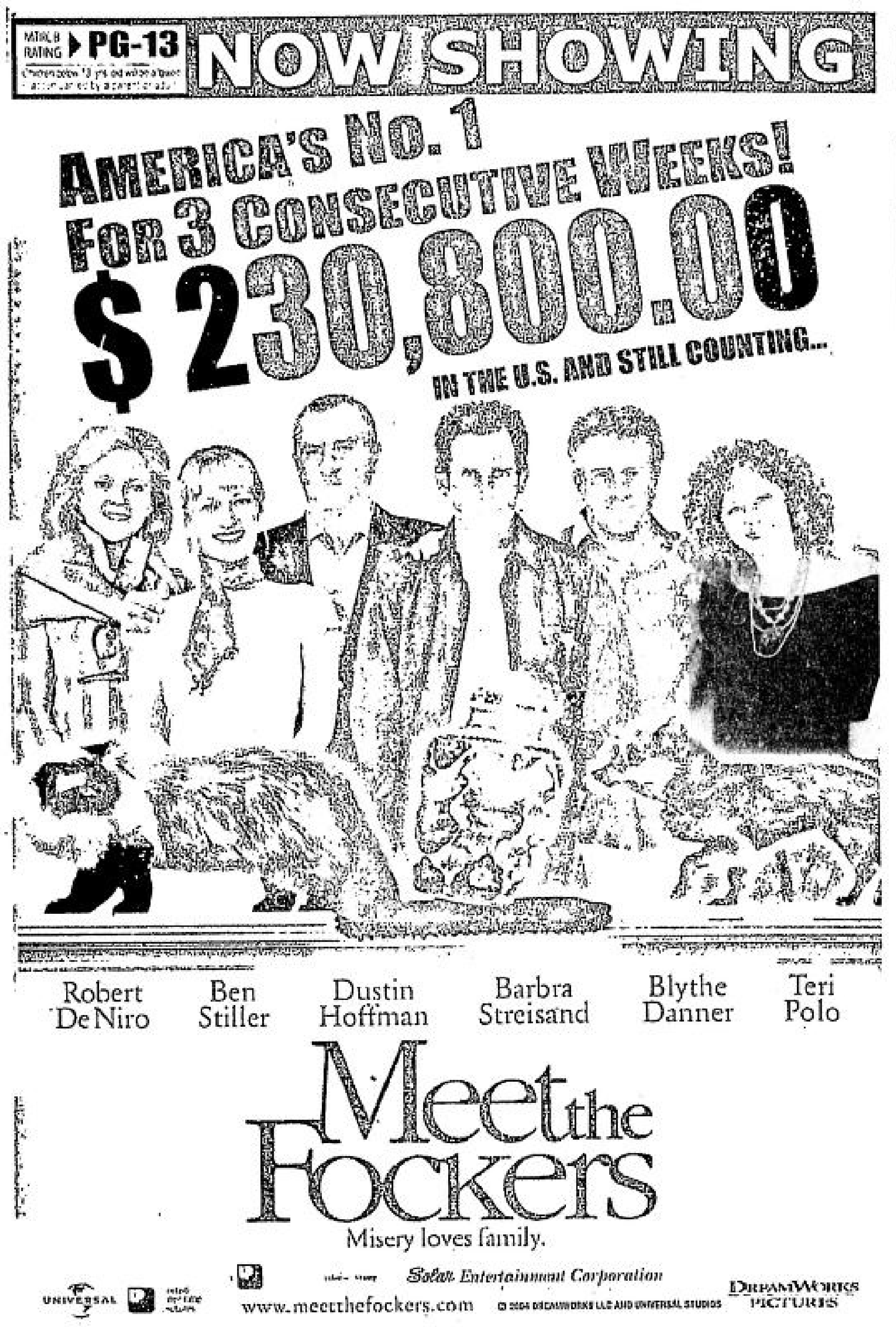
Stage experience

I decided to interview the seemingly reluctant movie star. In the course of our conversation, I found out that he had had stage experience in Cebu, and was in the cast of the Cebuano television series, "Bad Boy."

I asked him what his plans were after Montano's film. He confided that he had nothing planned. I wanted to ask more questions but concluded that he really wasn't that interested in a movie career.

However, when I saw the premiere screening of "Panaghoy Sa Suba," I was surprised by his fine performance. What quiet intensity he had, and what a fine presence he was on the screen. He could really be a fine movie actor if he'd set his heart on it.

Norma J, Cesar and "Panaghoy" have done their share. The rest is up to you, Reiven.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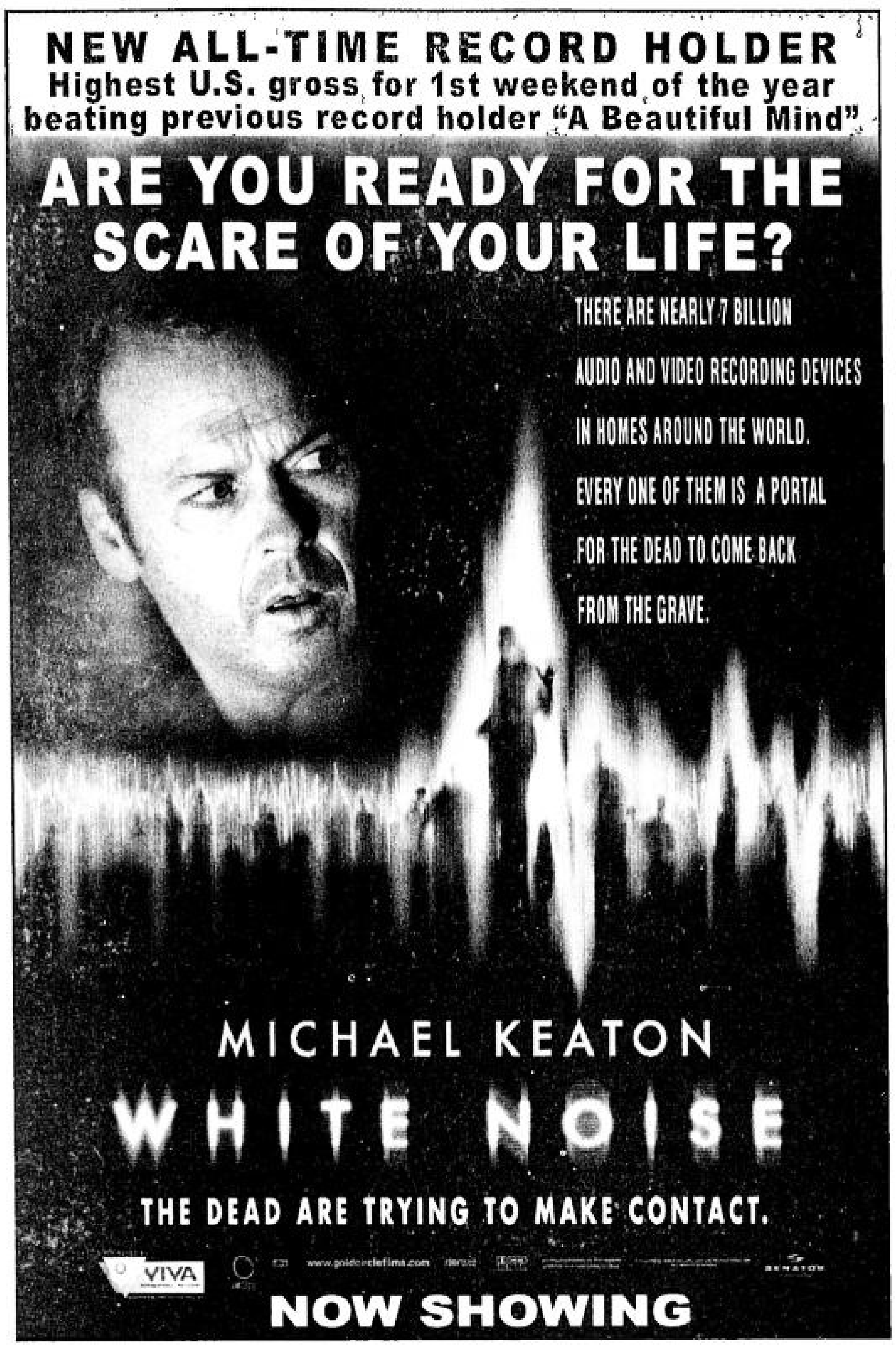
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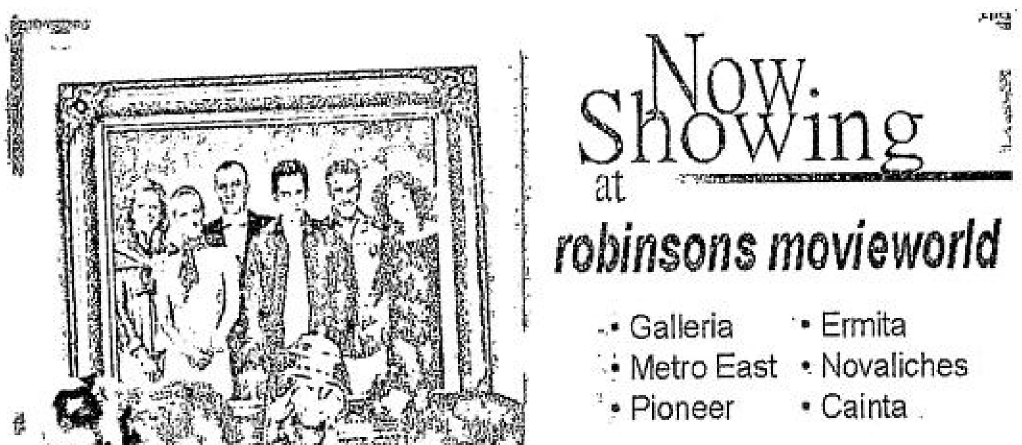
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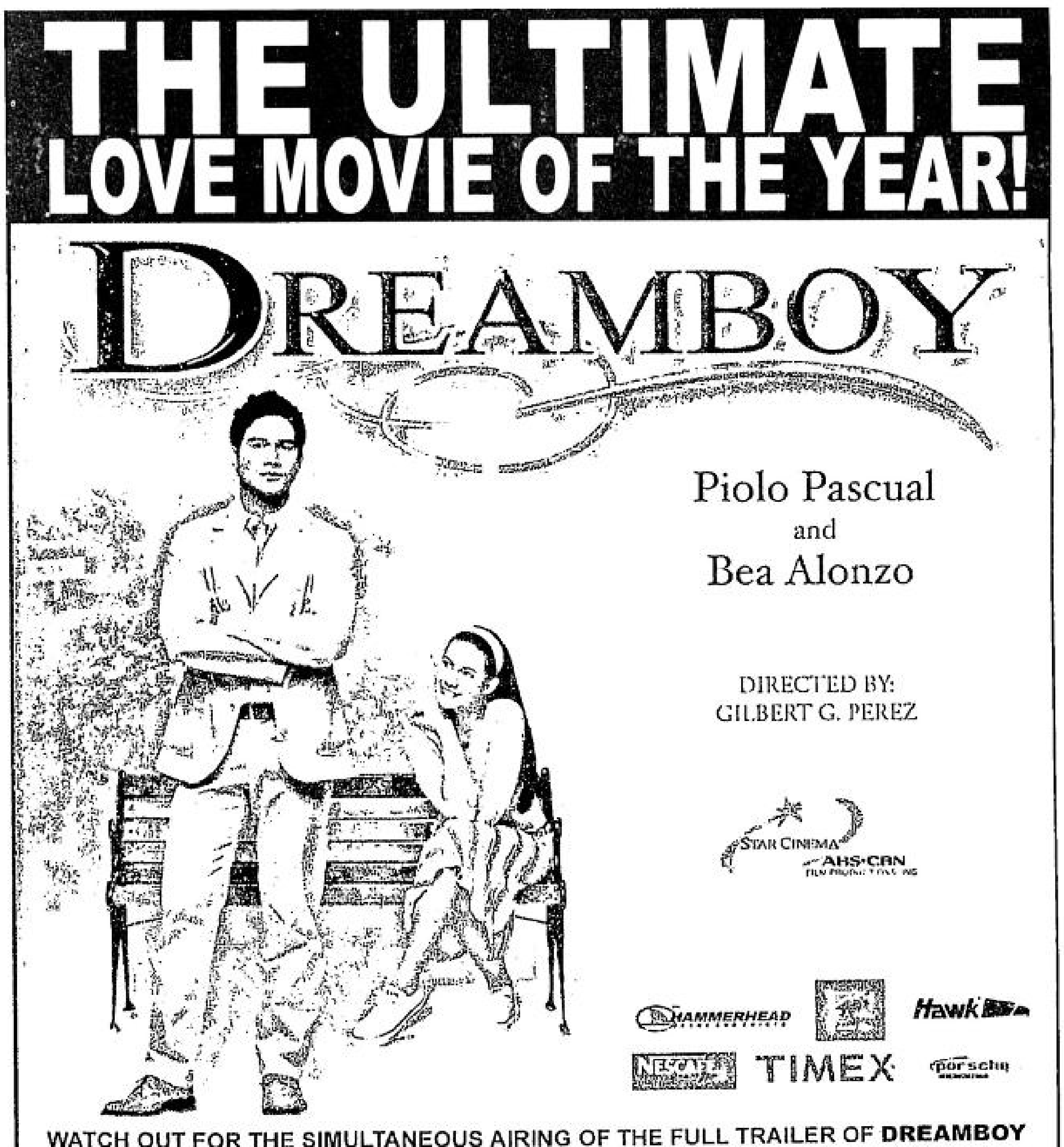
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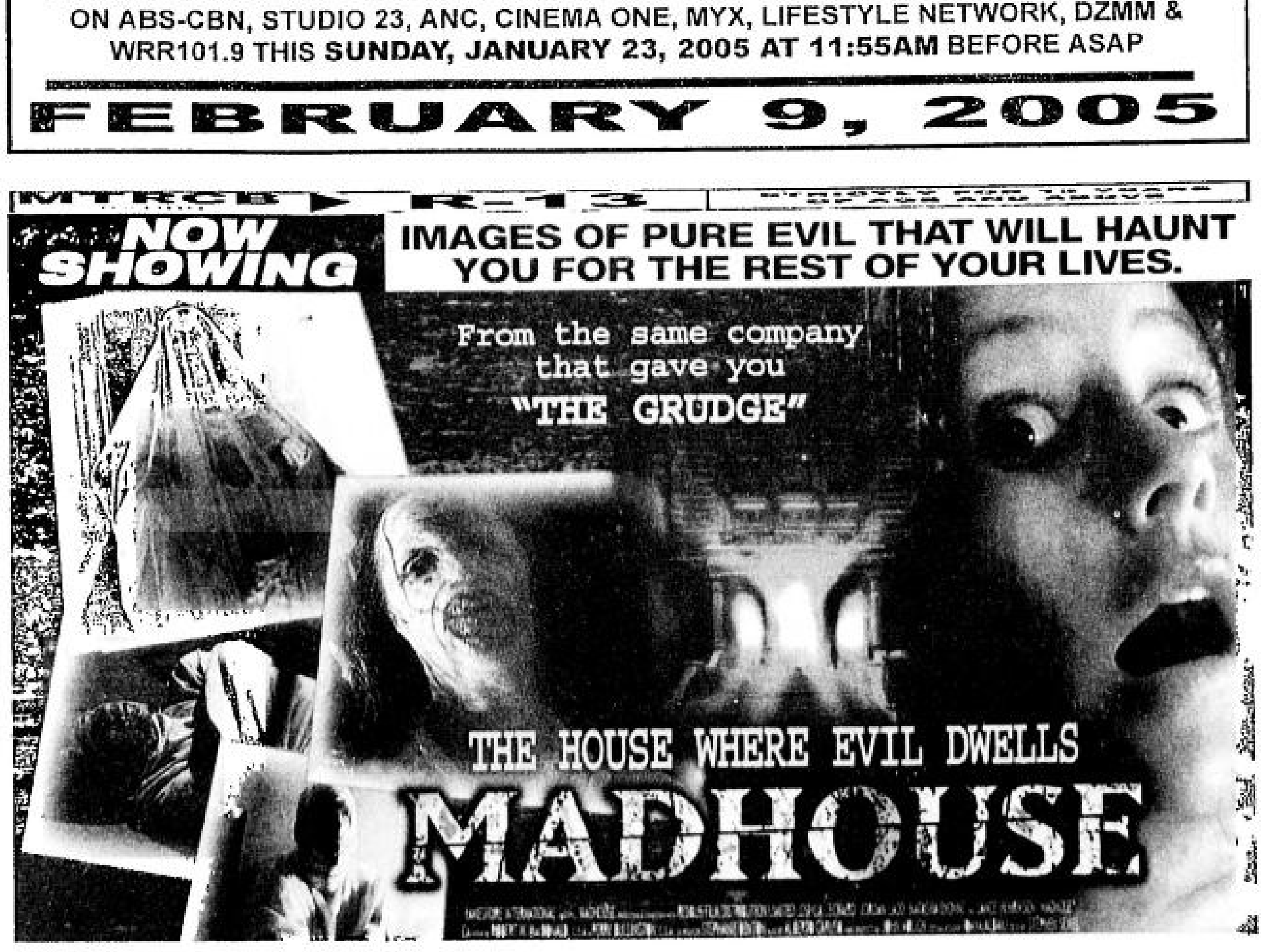
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Musical films are back in fashion

By Nestor U. Torre

IT'S been almost 20 years since "The Phantom of the Opera" first hit it big on London's West End and New York's Broadway. Since then, the show has earned hundreds of millions of dollars, showcased some hit tunes that have enjoyed show biz "lives" of their own, and made similarly durable luminaries of its then less than stellar leads.

This year, after a long, long wait, the popular stage musical has finally been filmed. The musical's fans are happy, of course, but wonder why the transition to the big screen has taken such a long time.

Practically extinct

One reason is the fact that, 10 years ago, the musical film format was practically extinct. Producers simply didn't want to take a chance on a then no longer popular film type, even with a "hot" property like "Phantom."

Later, however, the climate started to thaw. Audiences used to reality-based movies were no longer turned off by musicals' stylized or larger-than-life quality, and the success of the film version of "Chicago" a few years ago really heartened producers to finally film other hit musicals like "Phantom of the Opera."

Fans of musicals are ecstatic, because they've missed their beloved film format for so long. After thrilling to outstanding film musicals like "West Side Story," "My Fair Lady," "On the Town," "An American in Paris" and "Oklahoma," they want more, much more, of the same!

Favorable advance word

Well, now we have "Phantom of the Opera." This early it's getting favorable advance word, with a lot of the raves going to its young female lead, Emily Rossum.

The fact that Rossum is a new film talent is instructive. She's practically only as old as the stage musical itself, but the show's lead role has gone to her instead of to, say, Sarah Brightman, because youth is of the essence in this regard, aside from talent.

We point this out because, this early, some people have been asking if, when it's "Miss Saigon's" turn to be filmed, Lea Salonga will be tapped to play Kim on the big screen.

Uh, not likely. We don't even know when "Saigon" will hit the movie screen, but if it's filmed within the next five years, Lea would then be in her mid-30s, and thus too mature to play the role she originated in London.

Vulnerable

Yes, Lea is lovely, Asian and a great singer, but the character of Kim has to be in her teens, or at most in her early 20s, because she has to come across as vulnerable, and Lea can no longer manage that

Add to that problem the fact that the film medium's extensive use of close-ups further heightens a performer's youth, or lack of it.

So, who will plays Kim in the movie version of "Miss Saigon"? Could Jasmine Trias or Camile Velasco be "it"? Or, a Philippines-based talent could be discovered for the star-making role. Whatever—as long as a Filipina singer-actress plays the plum part!

AP

ROSSUM. Young star of the film version of "The Phantom of the Opera."

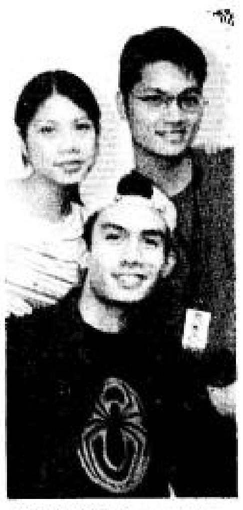
LEA Salonga (at right) as Kim in the original London production of "Miss Saigon."

Enchanted

From page A2-2

Christian Bautista

Mellow Touch DJs Bryan and AJ were recently joined by Christian Bautista as their co-host on "Weekend Hotlist," which airs Fridays from 8 to 10 p.m. The show gives listeners the top songs of the week, and features cool destinations, new bars and restos, and other gigs for the weekend.


BAUTISTA, center, with **DJs AJ**, left, and **Bryan.**

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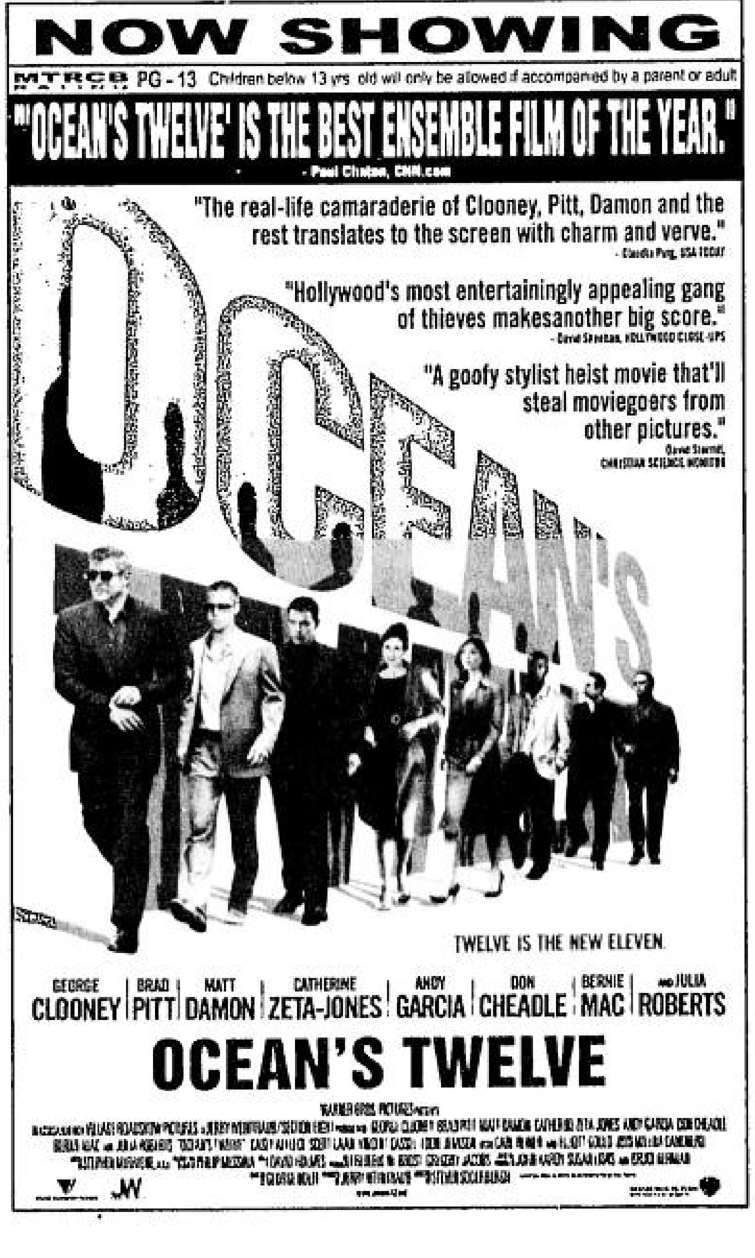
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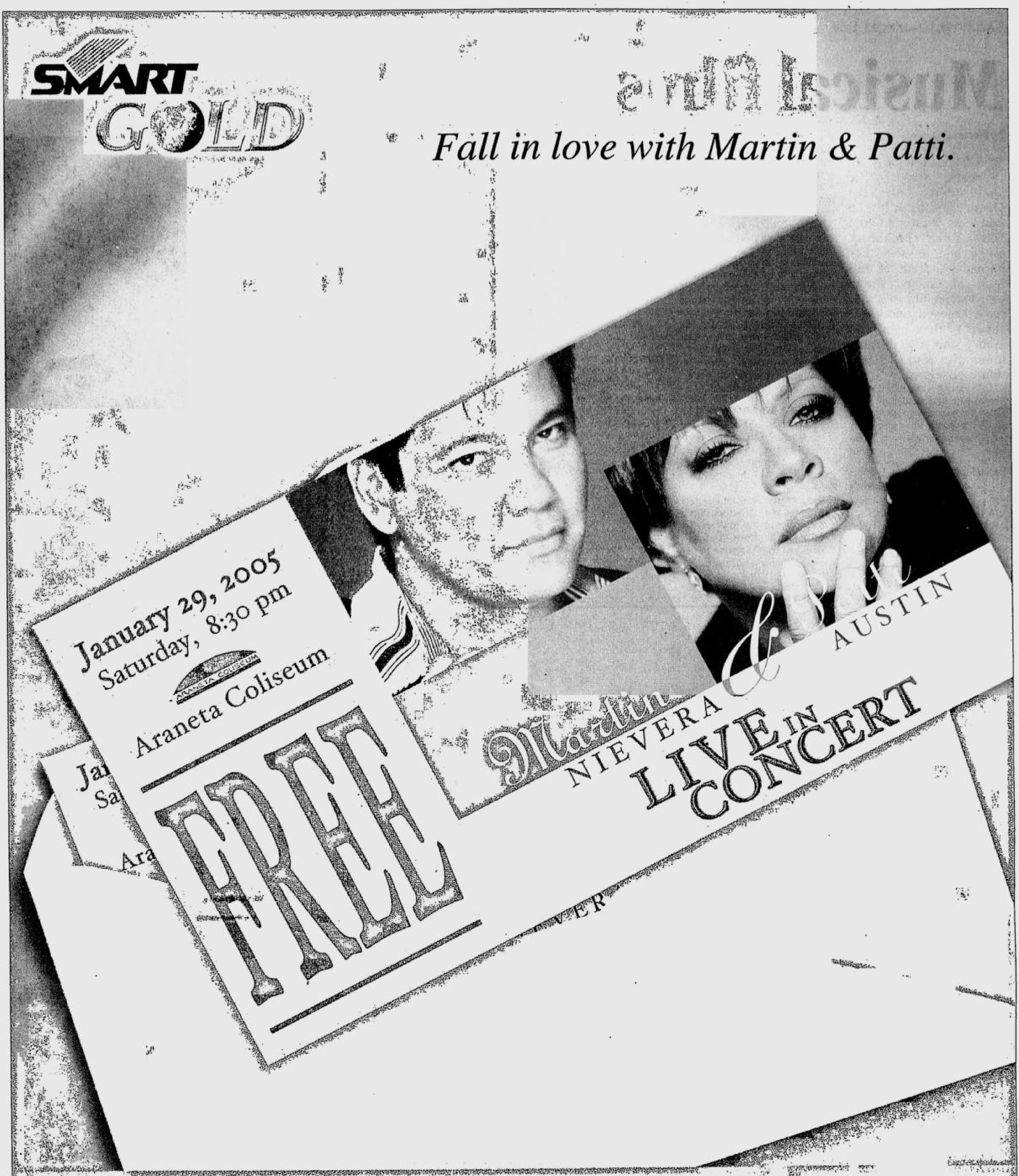
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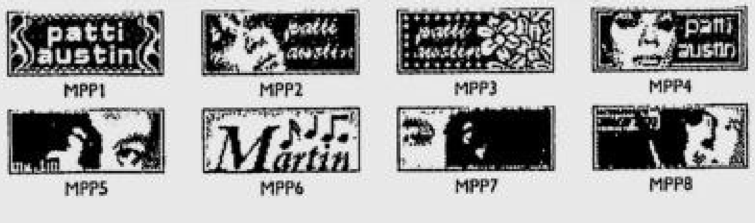
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SATURDAY *Special*

Sundance set for movies, stars, parties

LOS ANGELES—The Sundance Film Festival opened last Thursday with the quirky comedy "Happy Endings," but for 20,000 people heading to the top US event for independent film, "Endings" is just the start of 10 days of packed screenings, stargazing and parties.

And this year, it is not just American films and filmmakers who will have a chance to showcase themselves at the Park City, Utah, festival—but foreign ones as well.

Essential stop

Backed by actor Robert Redford, Sundance, which runs until Jan. 30, is an essential stop for unknown filmmakers looking to land on the marquee of independent moviemaking. Winning one of its awards, or selling a movie to a distributor, gives a huge lift to a rising star.

For the first time, Sundance this year is holding competitions for international films in drama and documentary categories in the same way it does for US filmmakers.

"This is a way of giving (foreign films) more visibility," said festival director Geoffrey Gilmore.

World cinema

The goal is to spotlight world cinema the way the festival has documentary films. Sundance has helped raise awareness of "docs," and the result was seen last year with the $28 million global box office of anti-fast food doc "Super Size Me." "If anything, more and more, we will find the documentaries dominating the independent arena," said Mark Urman, head of the US distribution for ThinkFilm.

World cinema competitions include dramas like Britain's "On a Clear Day," about a middle-aged man who swims the English Channel, and South Korea's "Green Chair," about an older woman's affair with a minor.

REDFORD. Filmfest founder.

KUDROW. Star of "Happy Endings."

BROSNAN. Plays title role in "Matador."

Documentaries

Documentaries range from Finland's "The 3 Rooms of Melancholia," examining the Chechnya conflict, to Australia's "Dhakiyarr vs. The King," in which descendants of a disgraced Aboriginal man seek to restore his honor.

A total of 120 films, about a third of them from foreign countries, will be screened, selected from more than 2,000 entries submitted.

The festival reaches its dramatic climax on Jan. 29 when juries pick top films, directors, writers and occasionally actors, who are singled out for special mention.

American values

Many of this year's US films examine American mores and values, including "Happy Endings" from writer/director Don Roos ("The Opposite of Sex"). The ensemble cast includes former "Friends" star Lisa Kudrow, Laura Dern and Maggie Gyllenhaal.

Experimental fare includes "Who Killed Cock Robin," about the intersecting lives of three men in a depressed Montana city from first-time filmmaker Travis Wilkerson. Commercial films making their premieres include "The Upside of Anger," a comedy-drama starring Joan Allen and Kevin Costner in a familiar role as a baseball star.

Kudrow's former "Friends" co-star, David Schwimmer, tries a career make-over playing a divorced drunkard in "Duane Hopwood," and James Bond actor Pierce Brosnan heads comedy "The Matador," in which he plays a Speedo-wearing hit man.

Bigger stars

Two producers behind "Matador," brothers Bryan and Sean Furst, are Sundance successes. This is their third film at the festival with each getting bigger stars and higher budgets.

"(Sundance) has marked a progression of things we've done that have scaled upward," said Bryan Furst.

Sundance 2004 box office hits like "Napoleon Dynamite" ($45 million) and "Open Water" ($51 million) bode well for this year's marketplace, film buyers and sellers said.

Healthy appetite

"From what I'm hearing, there's a pretty healthy appetite" among the buyers, said Bob Yari of Yari Film Group, who heads to Park City looking to sell "Matador" and another film, "Thumbsucker," about a guy addicted to his thumb.

Park City also turns into a big party. One novel concept this year is Chefdance, created by Kenny Griswold, in which 10 world class chefs make dinner for guests each night.

They won't compete, but "quietly, they all want to win best of show," Griswold said. *Reuters*

TV networks' sister companies offer romantic films for Valentine's Day

By Nestor U. Torre

GUTIERREZ and Locsin in "Let the Love Begin."

ALONZO and Pascual topbill "Dreamboy."

THE COUNTRY'S legions of incurable romantics have two love-oriented movies to choose from this Valentine's Day: Star Cinema's "Dreamboy" with Piolo Pascual and Bea Alonzo, and GMA Films' "Let the Love Begin" with Richard Gutierrez and Angel Locsin.

The two films are of particular interest to us not just because they're Valentine's Day offerings, but because they're produced by sister companies of the country's leading TV networks.

Star Cinema, the cinematic "sibling" of ABS-CBN, has entrenched itself as a major film outfit. Despite the slump that has forced many studios to close up, Star Cinema continues to produce more movies than most of our "surviving" film companies.

Major strength

A major strength of the studio is the extensive promotional support that ABS-CBN gives to its movie products. This substantial TV exposure gives Star Cinema productions an advantage that has boosted the chances of its movies at the box office.

But it wouldn't be fair to say that many Star Cinema's movies become hits simply due to their key advantage in terms of TV promotions.

The studio also bolsters its chances of success by carefully and intelligently choosing the kinds of movies it makes, most of them for the family audience.

The movie company is also to be praised for not resorting to the facile sex and violence formulas that some other production companies have been favoring.

Inactive

For its part, GMA Films has been inactive for some years, but is now staging a comeback with "Let the Love Begin." The teen romance is a big change of pace for the movie studio that in the past has distinguished itself by producing films like "Jose Rizal" and "Muro-Ami." Movie buffs hope, therefore, that GMA Films will eventually also bankroll other exceptional movies along the lines of those two memorable motion pictures.

For now, however, we're happy that GMA Films has resumed making movies, even with a relatively lightweight production like "Let the Love Begin."

Encouraging sign

The company's return to filmmaking is an encouraging sign that Film Year 2005 will be significantly better than 2004. We've been predicting such an improvement, so we're happy to welcome GMA Films back, and to wish it a prosperous movie year.

We also hope that the studio's comeback will encourage other movie producers studios to resume making films this year. And we trust that Filipino viewers will go out of their way to support our producers' best movies. May "Dreamboy" and "Let the Love Begin" be among them!

'American Idol' premiere heats up Fox ratings

LOS ANGELES—The fourth-season premiere of Fox's musical juggernaut "American Idol" dominated television on Tuesday, outdrawing the other five leading broadcast networks combined in total viewership and audience rating, according to preliminary ratings.

Nielsen Media Research preliminary data released on Wednesday said the show averaged 33.45 million viewers for the 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. window. Fox said that number surpassed the combined viewership of ABC, NBC, CBS, UPN and the WB in the same period.

Advertisers

"Idol" also took a 33 percent share of audiences ages 18 to 49, the group most coveted by advertisers. Each share point represents one percent of viewers tuned in to television.

A year ago, when the third season of "Idol" debuted on a Monday in a one-hour slot, it drew 28.2 million viewers and a 30 percent share of the 18-to-49 audience.

Fox, mired in a season-long ratings slump, had warned on Monday that the numbers for this season's installment of "Idol" would likely decline.

Audience

"What surprised me last year, its third year, was that its audience grew. We certainly don't expect to see that this year," said Gail Berman, head of Fox's entertainment division, told television critics on Monday.

Tuesday's premiere was in fact the second-highest rated broadcast of "American Idol" ever, behind the season two finale. It was also Fox's third-most watched night of entertainment programming in network history.

Fox is a unit of News Corp. *Reuters*

Tale of impotent man who wasn't

By Noelani Torre

IT was the title that did it. There we were trying to decide between "Ocean's 12" and "Kung Fu Hustle" when we saw it pop out on the screen—"In Search of an Impotent Man." Hmm, impotence? Could be interesting.

The poster outside claimed that it was "a romantic comedy in the tradition of 'Notting Hill,'" and we noticed that it wasn't a Hollywood production as we'd first assumed, but a German one. Okay, even better—after all, aren't ace directors like Fassbinder and Herzog from Germany? Gosh, this could even be an art film, burbled our inner optimist—which just goes to show how unreliable judgments based on titles and posters are.

Plodding pace

"In Search of an Impotent Man" is indeed classifiable as a romantic comedy, and it does try to be "Notting Hill" or "Bridget Jones"-ish, but *try* is the operative word here. It strives, but it doesn't quite get there. Hampered by a plodding pace, clichés, and characters who take their cockamamie ideas too seriously, the only resemblance between this movie and its better counterparts is the boy-meets-girl plot.

Filter

Based on the bestselling novel of the same title by Gaby Hauptmann, the film is directed by John Henderson, who for some reason chose to film the entire movie with a filter that gave everything a distinctly orangey glow. You get used to it after a while, but it sort of reminded us of the "X-Files" lighting in Mulder's alien-recollection scenes (which isn't exactly a good subtext for this kind of film).

Let us tell you a little bit about the story: There's this girl, her name is Carmen (Katrin Weisser), she's good looking, blonde, in her 20s, has what looks to be a successful career and, what's more, a great butt. In short, she's got it made—except in the romance department.

She's constantly getting propositioned by one-track-minded clients and her boyfriend is cheating on her. Carmen blames it all on sex. So, take the sex away and everything's solved, right?

Um, we wouldn't think so, but she does. You don't want to know how dense this girl can get. So up she goes and posts an ad looking for an impotent man—hence the movie's title.

The impotent man, David (Tim Williams), turns out not to be impotent after all, but he has to hide the fact or she'll find out he's been lying all along, etc. Ten minutes into the film and you already know how it's going to end.

Well, that's not exactly a bad thing, since we do expect happy endings from this kind of flick, but that's not the only thing here that's predictable. In fact, there's hardly anything in this movie that's surprising.

Plot twists

The gags are old—he wears three pairs of underwear, she tries to "test" if his motor is running by feeding him Viagra, etc. The characters are stereotypical—Cute girl friend? Check. Gay friend? Check. Old lover who'll spill all? Check. And the plot twists are so hackneyed that they can hardly be called twists at all. Like that mistaken identity thing—we've heard that one before.

This film's main problem, however, is its sense of timing—or lack of it. Comedians keep telling us that timing is everything when you want to get laughs, but laughter wasn't something we were hearing much of from our fellow viewers.

The story slogged along up to the bitter end, by which time we were regretting that we didn't decide to watch "12" instead. If you're going to be bored to tears, wouldn't you rather have it happen in Brad Pitt's company?

U2. Began as a school band in Dublin, Ireland, in 1976.

The talent search in U2's past

SHOW BIZ Q & A

Rito P. Asilo

FROM Alex Malonzo: **"I love U2's latest album, 'How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb.' How did Bono and the boys come together?"**

Alex, would you believe your favorite rock band was also a product of a talent search? U2 began as a school band in Dublin, Ireland in 1976 after vocalist Bono (real name: Paul Hewson), guitarist The Edge (David Evans), bassist Adam Clayton, drummer Larry Mullen Jr. and Dick Evans gathered to answer Mullen's recruitment ad on the high school bulletin board.

Calling themselves Feedback, then The Hype, the group initially played cover versions of The Beatles and Rolling Stones' hits at local gigs.

When Evans left the group the following year to form his own band, the boys settled on U2, around which time Hewson also chose to adopt the stage name "Bono," culled from a billboard advertising a hearing aid called Bono Vox.

In 1978, while still in their final year in school, U2 won a talent search (sponsored by a local tabloid and an alcoholic beverage), which eventually led to a recording contract with CBS Ireland. When the boys released their debut EP, "U2-3" (which included the singles: "Out of Control," "Stories" and "Boy-Girl"), the album zoomed all the way to the top of the Irish chart.

Then, the group decided to duplicate its luck in the United Kingdom. So, three months after releasing the EP, U2 was booked for shows at a popular pub in London. Unfortunately, only nine people turned up to watch them!

It may have taken U2's recordings five years to start appearing on top of the UK and US charts, but when they did (in 1981, specifically), life was never the same again for Bono and the boys. These rock luminaries are not infallible (remember 1997's "Pop"?). Still, their latest collection, "How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb," copped Billboard 200's No.1 spot when it was released last month, and is now a certified triple-platinum disc.

***

Rep's 'Oh Romeo'

Repertory Philippines opens its 68th season this month at Greenbelt 1's Onstage with Ephraim Kishon's hilarious comedy, "Oh Romeo," a delightful farce featuring William Shakespeare (Miguel Faustmann) and his popular characters, Romeo (Michael Williams) and Juliet (Pinky Amador). The play, directed by Joy Virata, poses the intriguing question: What if The Bard's star-crossed lovers didn't die? Go see for yourself! Call Ria or Gidget at 887-0710.

Life beyond death

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

THIS is the response of my spiritual teacher, Jagad Guru, to the inquiry of a grieving parent over the death of a child:

"You may lament the death of a child or loved one and think there is little meaning left in life. But the fact is, you yourself have a certain number of years in your body. Why not use it to serve the Supreme Person? Instead of just loving one child, why not give your whole life to serving the Supreme Being and helping all of His children?

Illusion

"Why limit yourself to one child and live in the illusion of the perfect eternal family life? It's not possible for family members to stick together eternally. This is *maya* or illusion.

"Now you may be thinking God is so cruel that He is letting this happen. No, God loves you and He is educating you, because no one dies. In fact, the child has not died. The person you thought was a child was not a child. There was an eternal living entity whom you never really got to know.

Misplaced attachment

"The whole point is misplaced attachment, and that attachment gets taken away. The problem is not somebody dying, because the living being is the spirit soul, and is eternal. We are the imperishable soul. The body dies but we do not die.

"What if you had to leave your own body tomorrow? What would you suffer then? You would leave everyone. In other words, the pain you are now suffering from having one person taken away from you is, in many ways, alleviated by the fact that you still have your husband, house, car, friends, parents, your own body, etc.

Pain

"When *you* have to face death, you leave everybody at one time. So if you multiply the pain that you are suffering now many times, then you can experience the pain of the person who is dying. The more attachments you have, the more painful it becomes. This is a lesson you have to understand. So don't wasn't time. You don't know when you have to leave. Take shelter in the Supreme Person and give Him your life."

Hopefully, the advice of Jagad Guru will enlighten many people on the subject of dying. It is an important lesson that we have to face sooner or later. The more we understand and realize the truth of the matter, the less disturbed we will become. Death, where is thy sting? There is no sting for those who have been liberated by the Absolute Truth.

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MONTANO both starred in and directed "Panaghoy sa Suba."

Nasty rumor fails to dampen Cesar Montano's spirits

By Nestor U. Torre

AFTER winning the Best Director award in the 2004 Metro Manila Film Festival, Cesar Montano felt like he was on top of the world. But his happiness was recently soured by a rumor that he didn't really deserve the award, because it should have gone to—Marilou Diaz-Abaya!

Huh?! How did Marilou enter the picture? *Was* she the "real" director of "Panaghoy sa Suba"?

That's what the rumormongers want everyone to think. They believe that the acclaimed director of Cesar Montano starrers like "Jose Rizal" and "Muro Ami" "secretly" went to Bohol to help Cesar.

Much better

To their minds, this explains why "Panaghoy" is so much better than the actioners Cesar has previously directed.

Makes sense, doesn't it?—Except for one key fact: Marilou Diaz-Abaya never went to Bohol when Cesar was shooting his movie there.

Other film people, like Behn Cervantes, visited Cesar's set. (We were also supposed to go, but the schedule of our visit was changed, and we could no longer make it on the new date.)

But you don't hear people speculating that Behn "secretly" directed some scenes of "Panaghoy," do you?

Strong artistic bond

No, the rumor focuses on Cesar and Marilou, because the "rumor mongrels" know that they have a strong artistic bond, as proven by the outstanding films they've made together.

Perhaps the rumor is being spread by people who are congenitally angry at Marilou, *and* envious of Cesar's victory? They could be trying to hit two birds with one stone: To dilute Cesar's directorial triumph, and to cast doubts on Marilou's artistic integrity.

Now, who could these people be, and why would they want to do that? Alas, our film world is rife with mongrels with all sorts of fleas bugging them.

Compliment

Happily, Cesar himself refuses to react the way his rivals want him to. In fact, he effectively takes the wind out of their sails by breezily saying that he takes the rumor as "a compliment, because it's an honor that my work in 'Panaghoy' has been mistaken for Marilou's."

Way to go, Cesar.

As for the people who have been spreading the far-out rumor that Cesar didn't direct "Panaghoy sa Suba": Instead of undermining the actor-producer-director's well-deserved triumph by casting aspersions on his artistic ability and honesty, why don't you legitimately win your own awards by working as hard as he did, and directing better films?. That would be a less sinister and more productive move, don't you think?

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Stars'...

From page A3-3

Sir Robert Morley: Stars live in a cocoon of praise. They never meet the people who don't like them, so they end up with dangerously inflated notions of themselves.

Burt Lancaster: We're paid too much. But, we're also judged too harshly and too quickly. If we make a supposedly controversial statement, next day we may have half the nation hating our guts.—Which most of the time amounts to bigotry fueled by jealousy.

Best behavior

Robert Downey, Jr.: The media likes to show stars at their worst. So, you figure, why be on your best behavior all the time when all it takes is one slip-up?

Julia Roberts: I don't like to be mean to fans, but I have to have cops around me now. The worst is when people come up and just grab you.

Isobel Lennart: Show biz is about what they *show*. And it *is* a business. It's not reality, it's manufactured fantasy. Never forget that—the media doesn't, they go right along with it. Fantasy equals profit, and the truth be damned.

Louise Brooks: Every actor has a natural animosity toward every other actor, present or absent, living or dead!

Stan Kamen: When you have fame, everyone's your friend—they *say*. It's your enemies you have to watch out for—*they* never declare themselves!

Stars' wise words of advice for show biz hopefuls

By Nestor U. Torre

"ORDINARY" people work hard to become extraordinary stars for a number of reasons. True performing artists strive to attain stardom so they can become powerful enough to attract and choose the best and most challenging roles.

Some movie talents turn to acting so they can more easily achieve their true ambition of becoming directors. Others become popular as film stars so they can use that popularity to get into politics.

Still, others turn to acting to make up for something lacking in their own lives. They believe that, if they become famous, it'll make them feel more loved and appreciated.

Perks

However, most people struggle to become stars for fame and fortune.—Not very artistic reasons, but extremely practical ones. And, when they are achieved, the perks can be terrific.

But, stars soon find out that fame and fortune can have their other, darker sides—like, infamy and misfortune, anyone?

Add to that: Loss of privacy, too much money for your own good, suddenly discovering that you have too many relatives and hangers-on, not.to mention people who "love" you not for yourself but for your power and pelf—

Yes, it can be quite a rude awakening when popular and wealthy stars realize that, while stardom can solve a lot of problems, it can create a whole kaboodle of new ones, too!

So, what to do? Get into show biz with a song in your lips and a prayer in your heart—but also with your eyes very widely opened.

Know what you're getting into, the pros *and* cons to it all, and having an analyst along for the roller coaster ride wouldn't hurt, either.

Land of milk and money

Also helpful could be these wise words of advice from famous stars who have been there, done that. May their voices of experience warn young hopefuls today where the land mines are in show biz's land of milk and money—and how to avoid them:

Vivien Leigh: The classic movie star pattern is that the public loves you when you're on the way up, they dislike or hate you when you've reached the top, and they like or are indifferent to you while you're slipping.—By which time they're busy admiring and rooting for newer stars.

Woody Allen: There was this 18th century Talmudic scholar who said something like, "If you want to live long, don't become famous."

Angela Lansbury: After Princess Diana, the nature of fame has gotten more and more potentially frightening. If I were a young person starting out today, I doubt I would seek the same path.

ROBERTS. Exuberantly demonstrative fans can be dangerous to a celebrity's health!

Winona Ryder: What's awful about being famous is when people come up to you and touch you. That's scary, but they seem to think it's okay to do it, like you're public property.

STARS'/A3-2

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8 MAD HOUSE 10:45 1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00
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5 BLADE TRINITY 10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
6 RESERVE
7 KUNG FU HUSTLE 10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:45

METRO EAST 682-8193/99 • 682-6280
1 TWO BROTHERS 10:40 12:45 2:50 4:55 7:00 9:10
2 BLADE TRINITY 10:40 1:10 3:50 6:30 9:10
3 RAISE YOUR VOICE 11:00 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00
4 MAD HOUSE 10:50 12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00
5 MEET THE FOCKERS 11:20 1:40 4:00 6:20 8:30 10:30
6 OCEAN'S TWELVE 10:35 1:05 3:35 6:05 8:20 10:30
7 KUNG FU HUSTLE 12:30 3:00 5:30 8:00 10:30
8 WHITE NOISE 12:30 3:00 5:30 8:00 10:30

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1 MEET THE FOCKERS 10:20 12:50 3:20 5:50 8:25
2 OCEAN'S TWELVE 11:50 2:40 5:30 8:25
3 RAISE YOUR VOICE 12:00 2:10 4:10 6:10 8:30
4 BLADE TRINITY 12:50 3:20 5:50 8:25
5 KUNG FU HUSTLE 11:00 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 8:55
6 WHITE NOISE 11:15 1:20 3:20 5:10 7:00 8:55
7 IN SEARCH OF AN IMPOTENT MAN 12:00 2:10 4:10 6:10 8:25
8 NATIONAL TREASURE 1:00 3:30 6:00 8:30

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2 BLADE TRINITY 11:40 2:10 4:40 7:10 9:10
3 MEET THE FOCKERS 10:30 1:00 3:30 6:00 8:30
4 KUNG FU HUSTLE 11:30 1:50 4:10 6:30 8:50

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1 HONEY 10:55 12:50 2:45 4:40 6:35 8:30
2 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER 11:10 1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30
3 OCEAN'S TWELVE 10:50 1:15 3:40 6:05 8:30
4 SUPERBABIES 11:20 1:10 3:00 4:50 6:40 8:30

CAINTA 240-1061
1 BLADE TRINITY 12:10 2:50 5:30 8:10
2 MEET THE FOCKERS 12:40 3:20 6:00 8:40
3 WHITE NOISE 10:55 1:25 3:55 6:25 8:55
4 KUNG FU HUSTLE 10:55 1:25 3:55 6:25 8:55

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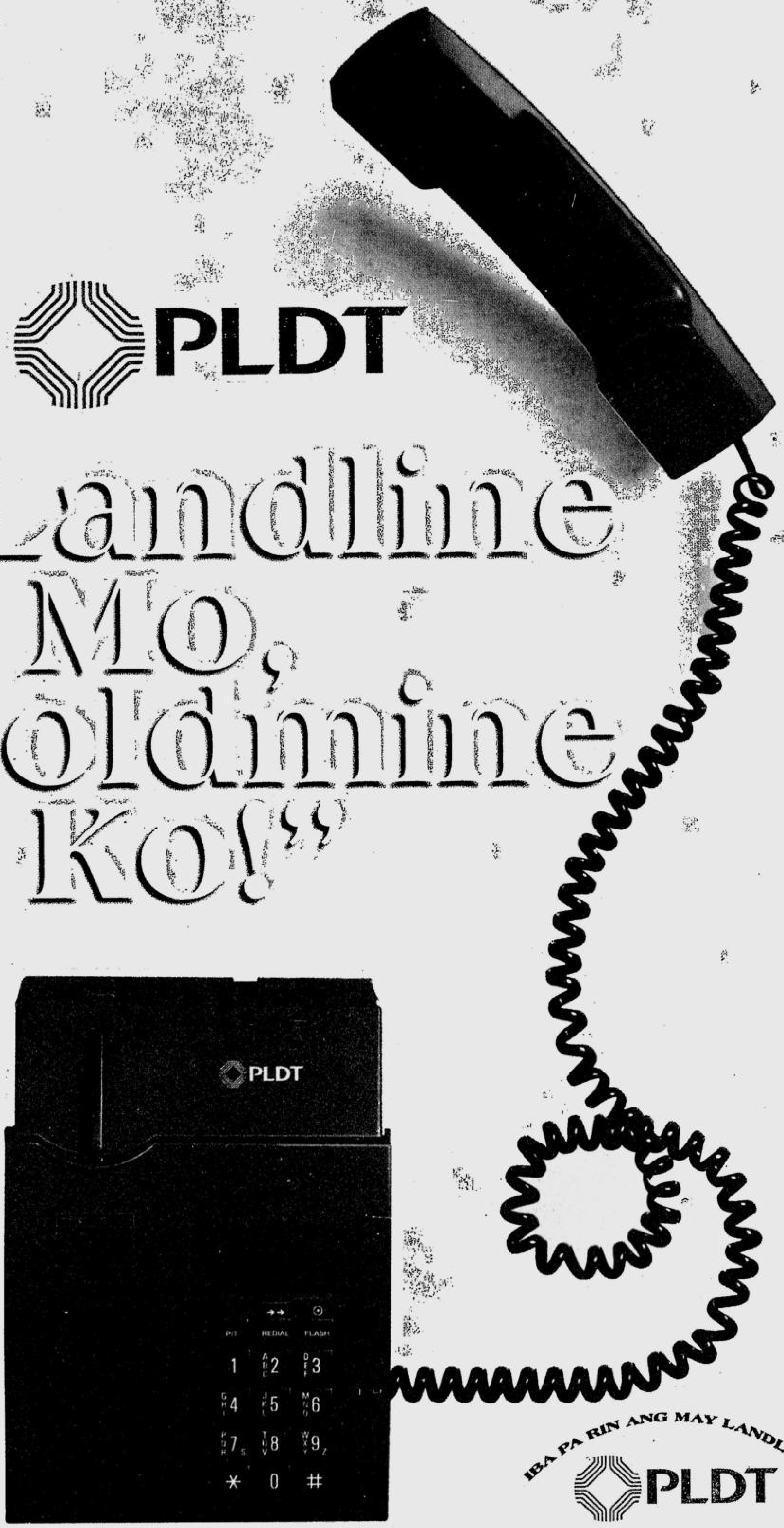

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2. To join, subscriber must register and enrol at any PLDT Business Office to become an official Goldmine Agent.

3. For every approved and installed telephone subscription that is credited to his account, the Goldmine Agent recieves the following:

GOLDMINE AGENT
Post-paid Subscriber
For Every Post-paid Sub Approved and Installed
Free P300 worth of NDD (PLDT-PLDT) and/or Vibe Internet Pay per Surf
For Every Pre-paid Sub Approved and Installed
Free P150 worth of NDD (PLDT-PLDT) and/or Vibe Internet Pay per Surf

GOLDMINE AGENT
Telesulit Subscriber
For Every Post-paid Sub Apprpved and Installed
Free P300 worth of Load on existing Telesulit line
For Every Pre-paid Sub Approved and Installed
Free P150 worth of Load on existing Telesulit line

Note: *Credits/loads will automatically be credited to the account of the Goldmine Agent and will expire after one (1) month. Unused credits/loads will not be carried over to the succeeding month.*

4. To qualify for the cash prizes at the end of the promo period, Goldmine Agents should have at least fifty (50) approved and installed subscriptions. All qualified Goldmine Agents will be ranked according to the most number of approved applications and awarded the following:

Category and Cash Prize (in PhP)

Platinum Category:
Top 5 / Php 300,000
Diamond Category:
Top 6-15 / Php 150,000
Gold Category:
Top 16 – 25 / Php 75,000
Ruby Category:
Top 26 – 35 / Php 50,000
Silver Category:
Top 36 – 45 / Php 20,000
Bronze Category:
Top 46 – 55 / Php 10,000
Pearl Category:
Top 56 – 65 / Php 5,000

5. Promo period is from January 10, 2005 to May 10, 2005. Deadline for submission of referrals with complete required documents is on May 10, 2005, 5:00pm.

6. Successful new applications credited to the account of the Goldmine Agent are non-transferable.

7. The Goldmine Agent is not an employee of PLDT. He is not authorized to collect money or any other monetary form from the telephone applicants.

8. All existing promos at the time of the application shall apply to the applicant. PLDT will confirm availability of every line application by mailing an official notice to the subscriber. PLDT will install the line within five (5) days from receipt of payment. All subscriptions are covered by an 18-month contract or lock-in period. Pre-termination rates of P2,500 apply.

9. Standard policies of PLDT on Credit and Collection shall apply. PLDT reserves the right to disqualify any Goldmine Agent from the Program if any violation is committed on existing policies on subscription, credit and collection and/or commit acts of fraud.

See flyers for details.

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Tan edges out SMC in bid for Del Monte

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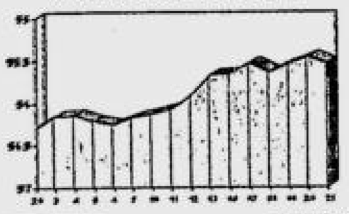


P 55.545 : $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Jan. 21, 2005

¥ 103.62 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Jan. 21, 2005

GOLD: $ 423.50-424.00
per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 19, 2005

By Doris C. Dumlao

CIRIO Finaziara SpA. of Italy has officially accepted the offer of tobacco magnate Lucio Tan to buy out its 40-percent stake in fruit producer Del Monte Pacific Ltd.

In a disclosure to the Singapore Stock Exchange, DMPL said Cirio has likewise secured the approval of Italy's Ministry of Trade and Industry to award the single biggest stake to Tan's group through privately held Basic Holdings Corp.

The total amount of the deal was not disclosed as the parties would still have to negotiate and enter into a definitive agreement, but earlier estimates placed its market price at about $175 million.

The acceptance of Lucio Tan's offer implied that the Lorenzo family, the second biggest stockholder, did not exercise the right of first refusal on the stake that was bid out by the Italian firm.

The shareholders of DMLP, however, were asked not to expect a tender offer by the Tan group.

"Shareholders should be aware that the definitive agreement has not yet been signed and there is no certainty that a mandatory general offer for DMPL will take place," the disclosure said.

"Even if a definitive agreement is signed, there is also no certainty that a mandatory general offer for DMPL will take place," it added.

Analysts said the Lucio Tan group may be able to avoid a tender offer if the deal would be structured in such a way that it would end up buying a holding company instead of directly acquiring the shares in DMPL.

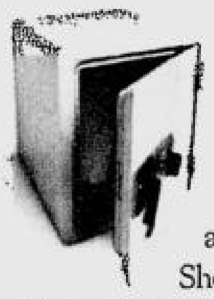
On the other hand, a mandatory offering could make the buyout more expensive for the Lucio Tan group.

There were two bidders for the 40-percent stake in DMPL during an auction earlier held by Cirio, the other being food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp.

TAN/ B2

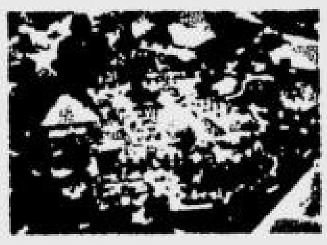
"When my investment allows me to sleep at night, I know I've made the right decision."

Eric Rabat
Ayala Westgrove Heights Lot Owner

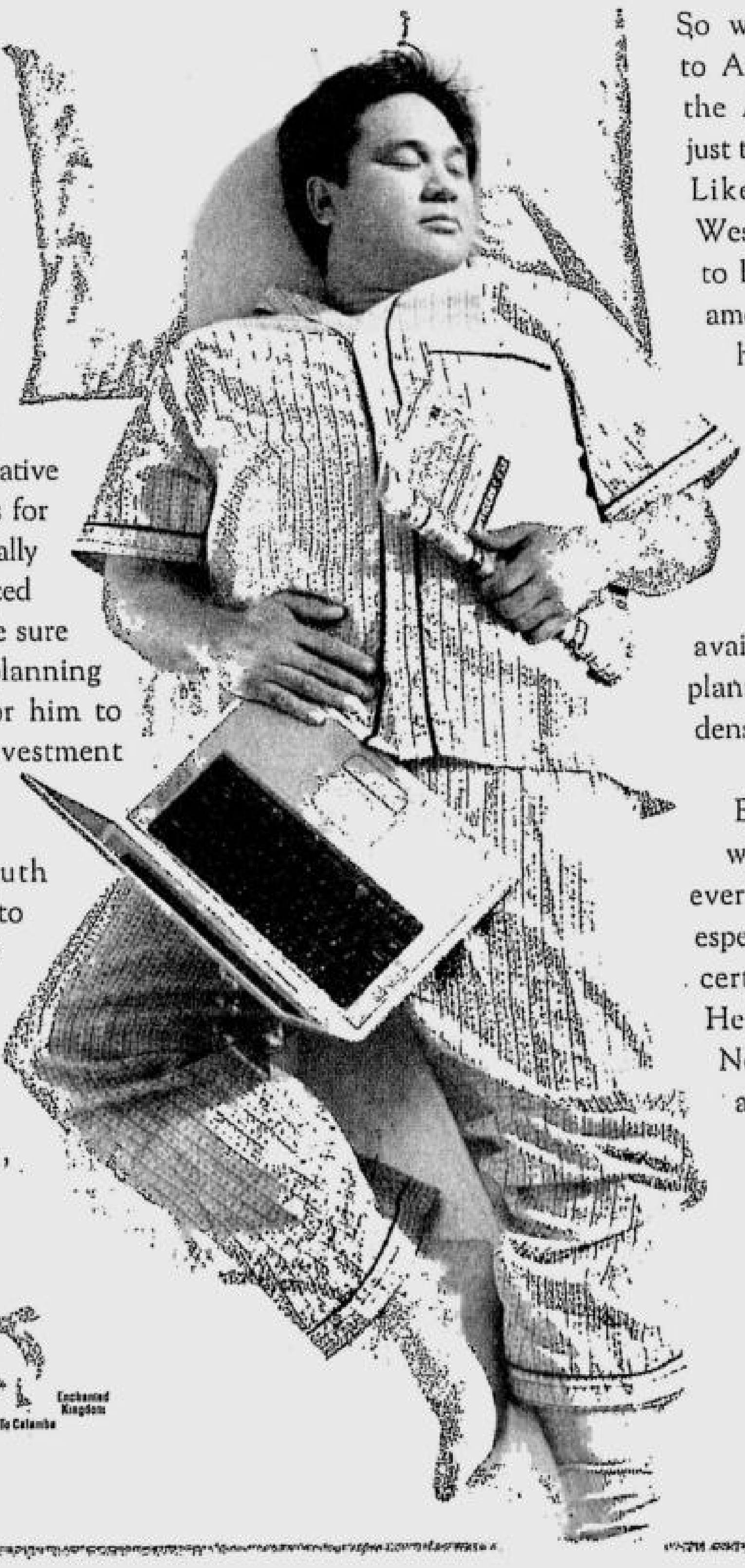


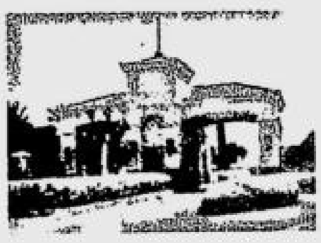
It's never easy to look for a worthwhile investment. After all, with the amount of work one puts in just to earn a good living, the risks of making a bad investment almost always outweigh the gains. Should I invest in a business? A franchise? Stocks? Bonds? Or should I play it safe and leave my money in the bank?

These were the questions that haunted Eric Rabat for many years. He has always seen himself as a conservative investor; one who takes calculated risks and plans for the long-term. Before going into any venture, he usually does research and makes inquiries from more experienced folks. When he put up his food franchise, he made sure he took these steps. Not surprisingly, his pre-planning paid off big time. And when the time came for him to take another leap – buying his first major land investment – he adopted the same strategy.



He knew that the South would be a good place to invest in having seen how Ayala Alabang thrived as a community. Through the years, lots here have appreciated 83 times their original value. If he wanted the same big opportunity, he had to act right away.

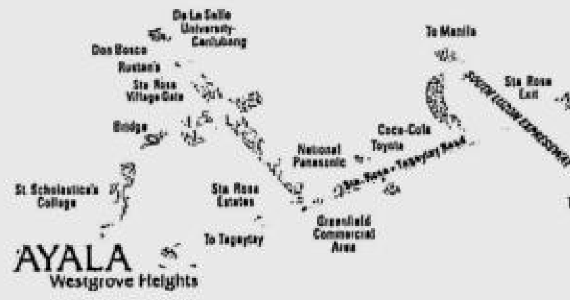




So when he was introduced to Ayala Westgrove Heights, the Ayala Land pedigree was just too familiar for him to resist. Like Ayala Alabang, Ayala Westgrove Heights is designed to be a self-contained community. All the necessary amenities are continuously being built around it: schools, hospitals, commercial centers, groceries and churches. Only 15 minutes away from Alabang, it is a sanctuary that does not isolate, but offers a chance to escape at the end of the day.

Inside, lush mango groves, rolling hills and a cool climate afford residents a certain calmness that is hardly available inside the cities. The entire property is master-planned to maintain wide open roads and spaces, with density kept at its most ideal.

Eric believes that this is the wisest land investment he has ever made for himself, but most especially, for his family. He is certain that Ayala Westgrove Heights is destined to be the Next Big Thing. Maybe that's why he sleeps soundly at night. Or maybe, his dreams are simply filled with the scent of fresh mornings spent amidst the hills and groves at Ayala Westgrove Heights.



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Public display of infection

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

HERE in Pasig City, we have relatively little trouble over...well, "informal settlers."

To us down here in my barangay, "informal settlers," of course, is only the deodorized term for what we grew up knowing as "squatters."

Pasig City does not have many of them, compared with Quezon City, for instance, which is the favorite customer of highly organized squatting syndicates.

What we have, nevertheless, are sons and cronies of big shot politicos who shoot each other in public places, such as near restaurants and schools.

They shoot each other in broad daylight, at that! And they shoot each other over some parking business, which makes something like P80,000 a month.

Now, nobody can dare say which is worse—having a lot of "informal settlers" or having heavily armed sons and cronies of politicos who have the brains of dust mites.

***

JUST the other day, Rep. Robert Jaworski Jr. took up the cudgels for squatters in a small piece of property in Pasig City.

The good congressman calls himself "Dudot," but he is also known in our city as "Son of Jawo," being the son of former Sen. Robert Jaworski.

The ex-senator, in turn, is known as "Jawo," particularly among thousands of basketball fans from about a hundred generations ago.

Still, the Son of Jawo's biggest claim to fame is, well, he's also the husband of Mikee Cojuangco, an entertainment and sports celebrity.

Mikee actually brought honor to our country by winning a gold medal in the last Asian Games.

Mikee's husband, on the other hand, gave honor to the citizens of Pasig City by showing us an amazing feat of political convenience.

Dudot actually made it to the House of Representatives as the lone congressman of Pasig City, after he moved into the city while he was still the councilor of the tiny municipality of San Juan.

***

NOW the Son of Jawo is the reigning congressman of our city, having beaten another son of another politician, who is also a former senator. We never really had that much of a choice in this city, you see.

As such, being the duly elected representative of the people, the husband of Mikee just had to call for a press conference for and in behalf of squatters.

In the press conference, you see, the honorable congressman denounced the demolition of shanties and market stalls in a property near the Pasig City public market.

Riling the good-looking Dudot over the demolition, at least based on his press release, was that the whole despicable act did not follow what he called the "rule of law."

There you have it—our one and only congressman in the city would readily call for a press conference to denounce the demolition of a squatter colony.

He nevertheless did not say a word—not even a pipsqueak of a word—when sons and cronies of politicos in our city wrought havoc in public places with gunfire.

***

WE CAN understand why politicians such as the Son of Jawo always take the side of what he called "less fortunate brethren," as a public display of affection for the poor.

After all, the poor in this country are many, and the squatters among them are always a rich source of votes.

No politico in his right mind will dare annoy them.

To be sure, though, everybody in this country has rights. The poor have rights. Squatters, too, have rights. You just cannot throw them out of your property, just like that!

But if everybody has rights, it follows then that even the owners of properties, which are invaded by the same squatters, must also have rights.

And if our one and only congressman should decide to speak up for the squatters ONLY, who then will take up the cudgels for the rightful owner of any property?

***

WE all have relatives and friends who are losing sleep over their squatted properties. They cannot even visit their own lots, fearing for their very lives!

The father of a friend of mine, for example, is a retired dentist. All his life, he worked hard to pay for a small piece of property, setting aside the payment every month.

Unfortunately, as the Son of Jawo would want it, the "rule of law" is being followed in the case of this poor retiree.

The "rule of law" has been followed for the past 10 years or so, and the poor man cannot even enjoy the fruits of lifetime labor, even during his old age.

I know that the husband of Mikee has no intention whatsoever to perpetuate such a terrible infection in our country.

He is only helping his "constituents"—i.e. voters.

If he is such a lover of the rule of law, why can't he go to court, instead, and just sue the living daylights out of the police, the land owners, and such?

I mean, why must he use the media? I don't know, but the last time I checked, the media is not exactly the best defender of the rule of law, either.

***

IN GOING straight to media, Dudot did not hesitate to accuse a Cabinet member of using his position for the "illegal" demolition.

It turned out that the owner of the Pasig property is a corporation owned by the family of Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap.

The San Juan councilor turned Pasig City congressman indicated that he could never know whether Yap used power and influence for the demolition.

Again—Dudot himself had no way of knowing if Yap, indeed, was involved in the terrible demolition, which he quickly condemned.

Yet, because he does not know for sure, he only calls upon Gloriaetta—please—to just fire Yap out of the Cabinet.

You can just imagine what Dudot will do if he has the goods on Yap!

And this is the guy who talks about the rule of law, with such a brave public display of confidence, that you would think he is a real lawyer.

PSE chair joins PCI Securities

PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange chair Alicia Rita Morales-Arroyo is joining PCI Securities Inc. as director.

After working with RCBC for more than 11 years, Arroyo said she was looking forward to working with a brokerage firm owned by one of the top three banks in the country providing a more diverse range of products and services.

Given the PSE's vision to be a premier regional exchange, she said that Equitable PCI (EPCIB) as a stakeholder of the exchange was equipped with advanced technology and could develop products that could reach a wider base of investors both here and abroad. Arroyo noted that in Europe, specifically in Germany, local financial institutions play a major role in developing the equities market.

EPCIB's Fitch rating was also retained despite the move of Fitch to downgrade three major banks in the country.

Arroyo said her arrangement with EPCIB would enable her to attend to her duties as a congressional spouse particularly in poverty-alleviation undertakings in the fifth district of Negros Occidental.

Alicia Arroyo is completing her second term as the youngest chair of the PSE.

She recently obtained the TOWNS (The Outstanding Women in Nation's Service) award in the field of Business: Stock Exchange. She focused on helping the PSE complete all the measures of the framework on reviving business confidence developed two years ago. The PSE index recently reached a five-year high.

SB Corp. loans hit ₱3.3B in '04, up 10%

By Christine A. Gaylican

LENDING to small and medium-sized industries was brisk last year, with the Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corp. approving some P3.3 billion in loans, beating its target by 10 percent.

SB Corp. president and COO Benel P. Lagua attributed the spike to the increase in the number of companies that invested in, or expanded, food and retail ventures.

Lending by SB Corp.'s wholesale lending unit, in particular, went up 77 percent to P2.3 billion, from P1.3 billion in 2003, Lagua said.

"It must be pointed out that the wholesale lending performance also related to the increase in credit lines availed of by our accredited banks," he said.

He added that even with the lack of a sovereign guarantee from the national government, private banks led by Export and Industry Bank, Bank of Commerce and Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. provided some P273 million in credit, particularly for SB Corp.'s credit guarantee operations.

SB Corp.'s microfinance program released P29 million in loans to 14 active micro finance conduits, a 46-percent surge from P20 million approved in 2003.

With the lively activity in the SME sector, SB Corp. said it was optimistic that it would again exceed its target lending this year by 10 percent to P3.6 billion, according to SB Corp. CEO Zorayda Amelia Alonzo.

"For 2005, wholesale lending is expected to contribute P2.2 billion, retail lending could provide P820 million, some P150 million could be extended for microfinance and P450 million is expected to be realized for the guarantee program," added Alonzo.

Considered the backbone of the Philippine economy, the SME sector comprises about 99.6 percent of all registered firms nationwide.

The sector employs 69.9 percent of the country's labor force, and contributes 32 percent to the economy.

Impressed by SB Corp.'s guarantee system, Indonesia's Central Bank said it would set up its own credit guarantee facility for small and medium Indonesian enterprises using SB Corp. system as the benchmark.

Tan edges out SMC . . .

From page B1

DMPL owns the brand rights for Del Monte products in the Philippines and in the Indian sub-continent. The company announced an 18-percent increase in its third-quarter revenue this year to $51 million from a year ago while net profit rose by 34 percent to $4.5 million.

Higher sales in Europe and the Philippines, and the consolidation of the Great Lakes facility in China it recently acquired, contributed to the growth in revenue. Robust sales of pineapple juice concentrate fueled expansion of sales in Europe but sales in the US remained weak due to lower pricing.

The Lucio Tan group has interests in tobacco and liquor, manufacturing, property, banking, airline and airline services and education.

Property, mining issues lift market

SHARE prices closed 1.59 percent higher yesterday as investors continued to buy into companies expected to announce strong results for 2004 and as miners attracted strong interest, dealers said.

Fresh interest in mining stocks, following a successful roadshow by government and private representatives in Beijing that raised $1.3 billion in investment commitments from Chinese companies, bolstered the gains.

However, dealers expect investors to begin taking profits next week as most shares are now deemed overbought.

The key composite index closed up 31.02 points at 1,987.84 after trading between 1,950.94 and 1,987.84. It was the best finish since Feb. 11, 2000, when it ended at 1,997.21.

Volume was 5.29 billion shares worth P1.66 billion after Thursday's 3.27 billion shares worth P1.77 billion.

The broader-all shares index rose 6.21 points to 1,176.48.

Gainers outpaced losers 80 to 20, with 39 stocks unchanged.

"Investors are in high spirits right now. Even if you advise them to sell to take advantage of the recent run-up, they just won't. They prefer to hold on to their stocks. This indicates their long-term confidence in the local market," said Ron Rodrigo of Accord Capital Equities.

Dianne Sy of Unicapital Securities Inc. said a strong peso and recent positive economic data inspired investors to continue accumulating shares even at more expensive levels.

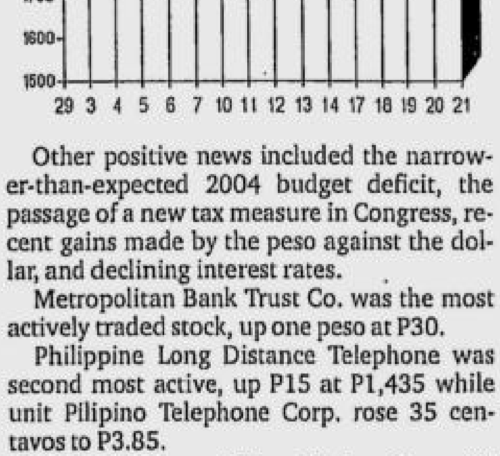
"There's a significant amount of funds flowing into the market given the strong interest in mining, property and even smaller companies," Sy said.

The market's steady ascent surprised analysts, as many believed share prices were due for a correction.

"Investors are scooping up everything they can buy," said Citiseconline.com investment analyst Mark Alan Canizares.

He credited the recent string of favorable economic reports for the market's resilience.

That includes last year's 5.1-percent growth in agriculture, slightly better than the government target of 4.85 percent to 5 percent.



Other positive news included the narrower-than-expected 2004 budget deficit, the passage of a new tax measure in Congress, recent gains made by the peso against the dollar, and declining interest rates.

Metropolitan Bank Trust Co. was the most actively traded stock, up one peso at P30.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone was second most active, up P15 at P1,435 while unit Pilipino Telephone Corp. rose 35 centavos to P3.85.

In the miners, Philex Mining Corp. "A" shares rose 18 centavos to P1.24 and its "B" shares put on 10 centavos at P1.34. Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. rose P1.50 to P6.70.

AFP, AP

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of January 21, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	10,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	27.5	30	27.5	29.5	1,419,600
Bank of the Phil. Islands	55	55.5	54.5	55	487,700
China Banking Corp.	575	580	575	575	1,100
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	1,200
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	49.5	49.5	49.5	49.5	4,000
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	740,000
International Exch. Bank	17	17.75	17	17.75	452,300
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	28.5	30	28.5	30	7,408,200
Philippine National Bank	23.75	24.25	23.75	24.25	118,800
Phil. Savings Bank	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	3,500
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	14	14	14	14	12,000
Security Bank Corp.	32	32	32	32	204,800
Union Bank of the Phil.	25.5	26	25.5	26	43,600
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	20,000
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	2.06	2.1	2.02	2.02	2,038,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	112	115	112	115	5,050
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1780	1790	1780	1780	1,320
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	18.75	19	18.75	18.75	48,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.88	1.96	1.86	1.92	28,951,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	925	935	925	935	61,000
Ipeople Inc.	3.9	4.05	3.9	4.05	38,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	300,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.036	0.038	0.036	0.036	17,600,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.22	2.22	2.22	2.22	40,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.55	3.85	3.55	3.85	39,911,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1415	1440	1410	1435	140,350
Ivantage Corp.	0.7	0.71	0.69	0.7	2,010,000
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	87,100,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	17	17.5	17	17.5	185,100
Manila Electric Co. B	26.5	26.5	26	26	683,900
Petron Corp.	3.55	3.55	3.45	3.5	3,377,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.12	1.16	1.12	1.14	537,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	24,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	6.6	6.9	6.6	6.9	1,487,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	6,600,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.4	0.44	0.4	0.41	3,490,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.8	340,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.2	3.6	3.2	3.45	8,241,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1	1	1	1	160,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.05	3.05	3	3	20,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	13,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	27.5	28.5	27.5	28.5	396,800
RFM Corp.	0.71	0.74	0.71	0.74	460,000
San Miguel Corp. A	58	58.5	58	58.5	52,000
San Miguel Corp. B	78	78.5	78	78.5	44,600
Universal Robina Corp.	9.6	9.6	9.6	9.6	6,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	350,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	7,500
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.007	0.008	0.007	0.008	303,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.007	0.008	0.007	0.008	81,000,000
Ayala Corp.	7.9	8.2	7.8	8.2	16,671,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.34	0.35	0.33	0.35	1,130,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.65	3.9	3.65	3.9	2,815,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12	12.75	12	12	39,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.028	0.028	0.027	0.027	14,200,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.94	2.02	1.94	2	1,044,000
APC Group Inc.	0.17	0.2	0.17	0.195	24,090,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0085	0.009	0.0085	0.0085	387,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	50,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.18	1.22	1.18	1.22	70,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	21.5	21.5	21.5	21.5	14,100
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.13	0.13	.13	.13	200,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.92	0.96	0.91	0.92	25,350,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.185	0.19	0.18	0.185	9,870,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.23	0.24	0.23	0.24	700,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.19	0.21	0.185	0.185	19,010,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	4.45	4.55	4.35	4.45	7,946,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.035	0.035	0.032	0.032	4,400,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	477,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	9.5	10	9.5	9.8	5,481,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	37	37.5	36.5	37	1,548,200
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	210,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.0675	0.0725	0.0675	0.0675	12,600,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1	1.2	1	1.2	9,330,000
Ionics Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	80,000
Jardine Davies Inc.	21	21	21	21	10,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.15	3.2	3.15	3.2	790,000
Keppel Holdings	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	880,000
Macroasia Corp.	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.55	2,405,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.36	1.36	1.32	1.32	1,553,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	70,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.5	0.52	0.5	0.51	72,570,000
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	0.8	1	0.8	1	20,000
Polar Property Holdings	2	3	2	3	14,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.15	0.16	0.15	0.16	3,230,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.08	1.08	160,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	100,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	30,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.46	0.53	0.46	0.48	1,770,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.7	3.9	3.7	3.9	40,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	1,130,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.18	0.18	40,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.22	0.235	0.22	0.235	1,610,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	1,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.7	1.72	1.7	1.7	233,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.0675	0.07	0.065	0.07	10,700,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.68	0.71	0.67	0.67	10,180,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.08	1.08	3,469,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.62	0.62	0.59	0.59	780,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.34	0.34	10,160,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	941,600
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	8.2	8.6	8.2	8.5	15,153,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.68	0.78	0.68	0.78	420,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.34	8,040,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	220,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.4	0.41	0.39	0.4	18,230,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.36	1.4	1.36	1.4	6,606,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	1,030,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.2	0.2	0.19	0.19	1,740,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	2,000,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.46	2.48	2.46	2.48	60,000
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.23	0.23	0.21	0.21	1,570,000
SM Development Corp.	1.44	1.46	1.44	1.46	150,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.5	8.7	8.5	8.6	3,810,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.65	0.7	0.65	0.68	850,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.68	0.73	0.68	0.68	750,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.014	0.015	0.014	0.014	473,600,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	5.3	7.3	5.3	6.7	3,214,000
Benguet Corp. A	3.8	4.6	3.8	4.4	167,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.9	3	2.9	3	133,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.006	0.0055	0.006	950,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.08	1.3	1.08	1.24	32,552,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.24	1.42	1.24	1.34	26,486,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.23	0.28	0.23	0.28	1,970,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	56,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.005	0.005	0.0048	0.0048	82,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0065	0.0075	0.0065	0.007	738,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.007	0.0075	0.007	0.0075	436,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.27	0.32	0.27	0.31	350,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.28	0.36	0.28	0.36	410,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	14,200,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.46	2.5	2.46	2.48	60,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.0825	0.09	0.0825	0.0825	23,200,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.26	0.28	0.26	0.28	2,910,000

DISCLOSURES

PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange chair Alicia Arroyo handed in her resignation as director and nominee of **RCBC Securities Inc.**, effective Jan. 20, to join another firm.

***

MANILA ELECTRIC Co. confirmed that it is projecting a 4.4 sales growth this year, higher than its 3.2 percent target in 2004.

***

FRANCISCO Ilao, former senior manager and head of the transfer agency department/MBTC-Trust Banking of **Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.**, has retired, effective Dec. 31, 2004.

***

PILIPINO Telephone Corp. said it is currently finalizing its financial reports for 2004 and expects to announce its audited financial results on March 1. ***Compiled by D.J. Yap, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

January 21, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.771129	1.000000	55.4830
Japan	Yen	0.007461	0.009676	0.5369
United Kingdom	Pound	1.443862	1.872400	103.8864
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.098884	0.128233	7.1148
Switzerland	Franc	0.648389	0.840831	46.6518
Canada	Dollar	0.625916	0.811688	45.0349
Singapore	Dollar	0.470861	0.610612	33.8786
Australia	Dollar	0.585430	0.759186	42.1219
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.045489	2.652590	147.1737
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.205629	0.266660	14.7951
Brunei	Dollar	0.469428	0.608754	33.7755
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000084	0.000109	0.0060
Thailand	Baht	0.019991	0.025924	1.4383
UAE	Dirham	0.209985	0.272309	15.1085
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.296800	71.9504
Argentina	Peso	0.262066	0.339847	18.8557
Brazil	Real	0.282879	0.366838	20.3533
Denmark	Kroner	0.134402	0.174292	9.6702
India	Rupee	0.017646	0.022883	1.2696
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.202956	0.263193	14.6027
Mexico	New Peso	0.068351	0.088637	4.9178
New Zealand	Dollar	0.542857	0.703977	39.0588
South Africa	Rand	0.127239	0.165003	9.1549
Korea	Won	0.000747	0.000969	0.0538
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024253	0.031451	1.7450

Commercial banks' bad loans declining

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BAD loans of Philippine commercial banks as of end-November eased to 13.57 percent of total loans from the end-October level of 14.21 percent, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday.

The slowdown was attributed to the decline in the sector's non-performing loans (NPLs) by 2.5 percent and the 2-percent expansion in the banks' total loan portfolio.

The commercial banks' NPLs amounted to P241.88 billion as of end-November against total loans worth P1.72 trillion.

The sector's real and other properties owned and acquired (ropoa), net of provisions, amounted to P191.66 billion.

BUENAVENTURA

Combining the NPLs and the ropoas, the commercial banking sector's non-performing assets (NPAs) stood at 11.69 percent of gross assets, declining from 12.19 percent in end-October.

The NPAs shrunk by 1.6 percent, while gross assets expanded by 2.6 percent.

In the meantime, the ratio of restructured loans to total loans slid to 7.31 percent from 7.29 percent as the total restructured loans contracted by 0.3 percent to P131.87 billion.

Non-performing restructured loans fell by 9.1 percent, bringing the ratio to total restructured loans down to 49.73 percent from 54.51 percent.

The NPL and NPA coverage ratio improved to 53.35 percent and 32.76 percent, respectively, from 52.61 percent and 32.55 percent last month.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura has been urging the banking community to "bite the bullet" soonest and trim its NPL ratio to 7.5 percent by the end of the year.

During the annual bankers' night hosted by the BSP Tuesday, Buenaventura said a one-year extension of the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) Act—instead of two years as sought by the Bankers Association of the Philippines—would be sufficient for the banks to clean up their balance sheets.

He warned that banks would face heavier losses if they would fail to sell their bad assets before valuation rules were tightened in line with global best practices.

Local banks have been reluctant to dispose of their non-performing assets as it would mean that they might have to sell them at a steep discount.

The SPV law intends to help banks get rid of their non-performing assets by waiving some of the taxes and reducing fees usually collected in the sale or transfer of assets. It waived the documentary stamp tax, capital gains tax and e-VAT (expanded value added tax). It, likewise, reduced the registration/transfer fees by 50 percent.

RP sugar exports seen to hit 160,000 tons

THE COUNTRY may export as much as 160,000 tons of sugar this year, with more than a fourth to be sold by March, as local producers take advantage of good demand in the world market, an official said.

"It will be not less than 160,000 tons," James Ledesma, head of the Sugar Regulatory Administration, told reporters, referring to the planned sugar exports in the crop year ending August.

Ledesma told reporters the tender for a shipment of 45,700 tons of sugar would be held on or before March 31.

The government expects sugar production to hit 2.14 million tons in crop year 2004-2005, 8.54 percent down from the previous year's output of 2.34 million tons.

Ledesma said the country's sugar output might be steady at 2.14 million tons in crop year 2005 to 2006, with the country likely to stay out of the global sugar market.

The government earlier forecast a 200,000-tons sugar shortage in 2005-2006 due to the impact of El Niño, high fertilizer costs, and a shift in planting patterns away from sugar.

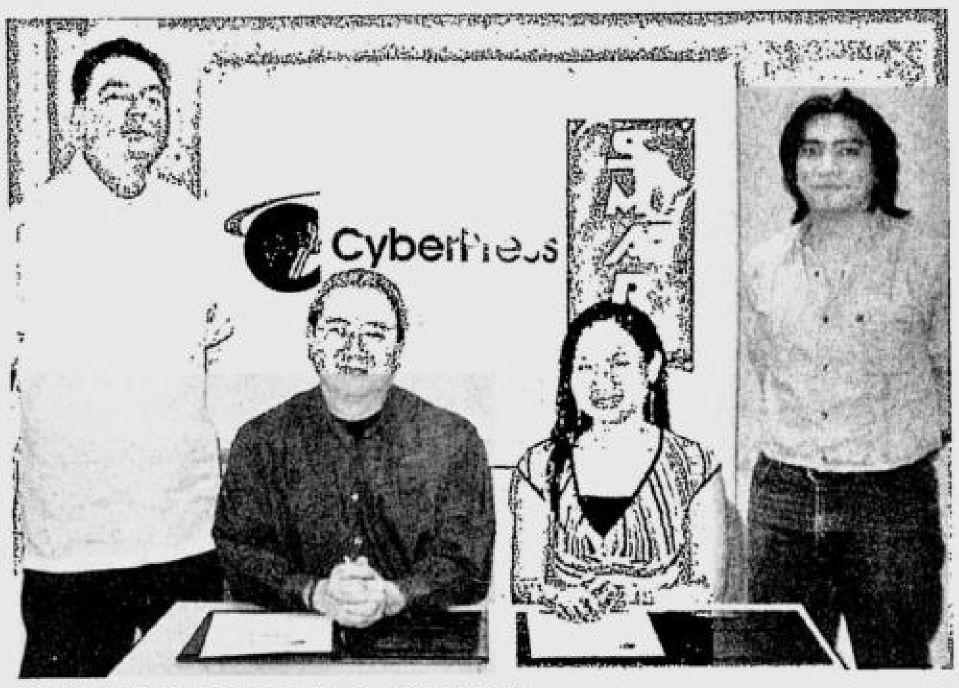
"We target a flat growth. We won't have exports, but at least we should meet our local consumption plus the US quota," he said.

The Philippines, which became self-sufficient in sugar two years ago, sold about 160,000 tons of excess sugar in Asia last year in addition to an annual export quota of about 137,000 tons to the United States.

A leading exporter of sugar in the mid-1970s, the country reversed the trend and became a net importer in 1993 because of shrinking productivity.

It became self-sufficient again in 2003.

Reuters



CYBERPRESS' 3RD ANNUAL FORUM

Smart Communication is sponsoring The Information Technology Journalists Association of the Philippines' (Cyberpress) forum entitled "Plug and Play." The sponsorship agreement was signed by (from left) Wo Rosete, Smart public affairs supervisor; Ramon Isberto, Smart communications public affairs head; INQUIRER business reporter Abigail Ho, CyberPress president, and Jing Garcia, Cyberpress sectoral representative for print.

DOF to continue pushing for removal of co-ops' perks

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance said it would continue pushing for the lifting of the fiscal incentives enjoyed by cooperatives despite the decision of the Lower House to junk the plan.

The finance department's proposal was estimated to raise P9 billion in additional revenue for the cash-starved government.

According to Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong, the DOF is hoping that the Senate will favor the proposal amid an ongoing discussion on a bill rationalizing the granting of fiscal incentives.

"Cooperatives have been removed from the list during discussions in the House, but we hope that it would be different in the Senate," Amatong said.

The proposal to withdraw the duty and tax exemptions of cooperatives forms part of the agenda to rationalize fiscal incentives granted to various sectors, which came in the wake of the government's burgeoning fiscal problem.

The rationalization plan seeks to repeal a number of special laws that grant incentives, including the Cooperative Code which allows cooperatives to operate with several tax and duty exemptions.

The decision of the House of Representatives to keep the incentives of cooperatives came following the strong lobbying by cooperative groups, which claimed that the removal of the perks would have adverse impact on the growth of the "small sectors of the society."

The DOF is apprehensive that the Lower House's decision may also derail the progress of a separate proposal seeking the imposition of value-added tax on cooperatives.

The DOF is also pushing for the imposition of VAT on selected products and services that are currently VAT-exempt, such as services rendered by cooperatives.

The department said the argument used by the cooperatives in opposing the withdrawal of their perks might also be used to keep their VAT-exempt status.

"But fiscal incentives is not a right but only a privilege, and so the government should have the flexibility to withdraw them when necessary," a finance official said.

Raising specific taxes on oil products pushed

By Abigail L. Ho

THE GOVERNMENT stands to raise bigger revenue by increasing the specific taxes on petroleum products than by lifting the value-added tax exemption of local oil companies, the Independent Philippine Petroleum Companies Association (Ippca) said.

Ippca said the government could raise at least P10 billion by jacking up the specific tax on oil products by 50 centavos per liter. The amount is P2 billion more than the P8 billion to be generated from lifting the VAT exemption of oil firms.

The group, in a meeting yesterday, came up with a proposal that would help the government earn more from additional taxes, while easing the impact of the additional cost on consumers.

In its proposal, the group said the additional taxes to be imposed should be designed in such a way that the burden would be heavier on higher-income users to minimize the impact on lower-income motorists.

The proposed structure would involve hiking the specific tax on premium gasoline by 75 centavos a liter, while increasing the excise tax on diesel and kerosene by only 25 centavos a liter.

The pump price effect of imposing a 12-percent VAT on petroleum products would be P2.30 a liter for diesel and P2.70 a liter for gasoline, said Ippca executive director Rex Tantiongco.

"A choice between 25 centavos per liter of diesel in specific taxes or P2.30 a liter under VAT is a no-brainer. The specific tax is more acceptable to the public, and the government can also meet its revenue target simply by collecting from the oil companies," added Ippca chair Fernando Martinez.

Ippca president Chito Villavicencio explained that while the VAT option would be beneficial to the individual oil firms' businesses, the burden that the consumers would have to bear would be greater.

Transport groups would be hard-hit by the VAT imposition, he added. A bill filed in Congress seeks the removal of the VAT exemption privilege currently enjoyed by oil firms.

Besides, Tantiongco said it would be easier on the part of the government to collect additional specific taxes on refined petroleum products than to collect the proceeds from VAT on fuel products.

Due to the complexity of the oil distribution system, he said the government would be forced to keep track of each step of the process to ensure that it would be collecting the correct amount from each oil firm.

"It will be a nightmare to try to collect VAT on thousands of transactions from 4,000 gasoline stations nationwide," said Ippca treasurer Glenn Yu.

Ippca further stated it would be difficult for the government to reach gasoline stations located in remote barangays and municipalities for VAT collection.

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GOINGS-ON

Hen Lin gets quality seal

HEN Lin, a 100-percent Filipino-owned fast-food chain, was recently cited for excellence by the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP), an internationally recognized system designed by a monitoring body to ensure food safety..

Hen Lin is owned and operated by M&H Food Corp.

The HACCP certification granted to Hen Lin's top of the line dimsum products is a quality seal marked on the food chain's food processing system.

"This ensures that Hen Lin's popular dimsum line is produced in accordance with HACCP elements," says Francis Manas, Hen Lin's VP for marketing.

These elements are divided into the following: Identification of risks (hazard analysis), establishment of critical control points and standard operating procedures, definition of critical limits (criteria), establishment of monitoring procedures, corrective actions with verification procedures and review of the whole system.

Video City bags award

VIDEO City recently bagged the Outstanding Filipino Retailer Services Category Award given by the Philippine Retailers Association. Video City general manager Joey Singian accepted the award from Trade Assistant Secretary J. Norman Hocson and PRA chair Manuel M. Siggaoat.

Video City is a Viva Entertainment Co. that offers only high quality and legitimate titles for sale or rent.

Video City, which notched a milestone in the franchising industry by achieving 500 percent expansion rate a few years ago, is also known coming out with system-wide and local store promotions as part of its efforts to increase sales and membership base. There are now 200 Video City stores nationwide and more are expected to open this year.

PLDT group accelerating debt reduction schedule

By Clarissa S. Batino

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. yesterday ruled out any public borrowing in the near term, saying it would instead aggressively pursue cutting its debt this year.

"We do not have any intention of accessing public debt in the near future. We are paying our debts on an accelerated basis as long as it makes financial sense," said PLDT president Napoleon Nazareno in an interview.

PLDT will pay at least $540 million of it debts this year. Of this amount, $370 million would be paid by the fixed-line unit while its wireless units would pay the remaining $170 million.

Pre-paying portion of its debts will allow PLDT to save on interest charges and minimize foreign exchange risks. The telecom giant settled last Dec. 20 a $106-million obligation ahead of schedule.

The plan, according to Nazareno, is to be more aggressive in paying its debts to allow the company to realize interest savings.

Of the PLDT Group's about $2.8-billion debt, $2 billion was owed by the fixed-line business. Wireless subsidiaries Smart Communications Inc. and Pilipino Telephone Corp. have combined obligation of $718 million.

Nazareno said PLDT aimed to bring down its debts below $1.5 billion by the end of 2006.

PLDT chair Manuel Pangilinan said the fixed-line debt would have to be reduced more substantially. The original plan is to cut it by $350 million this year.

Pangilinan said the PLDT Group had been generating sufficient revenue to accelerate debt payment.

"There is no need for PLDT to borrow. There will be no public exercise of debt financing. In that way, any credit downgrade on PLDT won't have any impact on our PNL (profit and net loss statement)," said Pangilinan.

Nazareno said the market had factored in the downgrade of PLDT. "It had very little impact and the share price rebounded right away," he said.

PLDT's share price closed at P1,435 yesterday from P1,420 on Thursday. Last Monday, it ended at P1,405 each.

Standard & Poor's downgraded the credit rating of PLDT, Globe Telecom Inc. and several other Philippine companies to BB- from BB in line with the downgrade of the sovereign debt rating last Monday.

PLDT and Globe earlier said the downgrade would not affect their finances, credit plans and share prices. The outlook on their debts are stable, according to S&P.

Nazareno admitted, however, that PLDT and all other companies would feel the impact of the downgrade on sovereign debt.

"We are not spared from the negative effects of a sovereign downgrade," he said.

A downgrade in the rating or even the outlook tends to raise the cost of the rated firm's borrowing as it indicated more risks, giving investors more reason to demand a higher return for their placements.

The debts of PLDT and Globe are rated BB by Fitch Ratings and Ba2 by Moody's Investors Service. The other two foreign debt watchers are expected to hand out a similar verdict soon.

As of end September, Globe had around $926 million in debt, 80 percent of which was foreign currency-denominated. With its foreign exchange swap contracts, Globe's foreign debt was effectively reduced to 55 percent of the total debts. Globe has $160 million worth of debts maturing in 2005 and another $168 million falling due in 2006.

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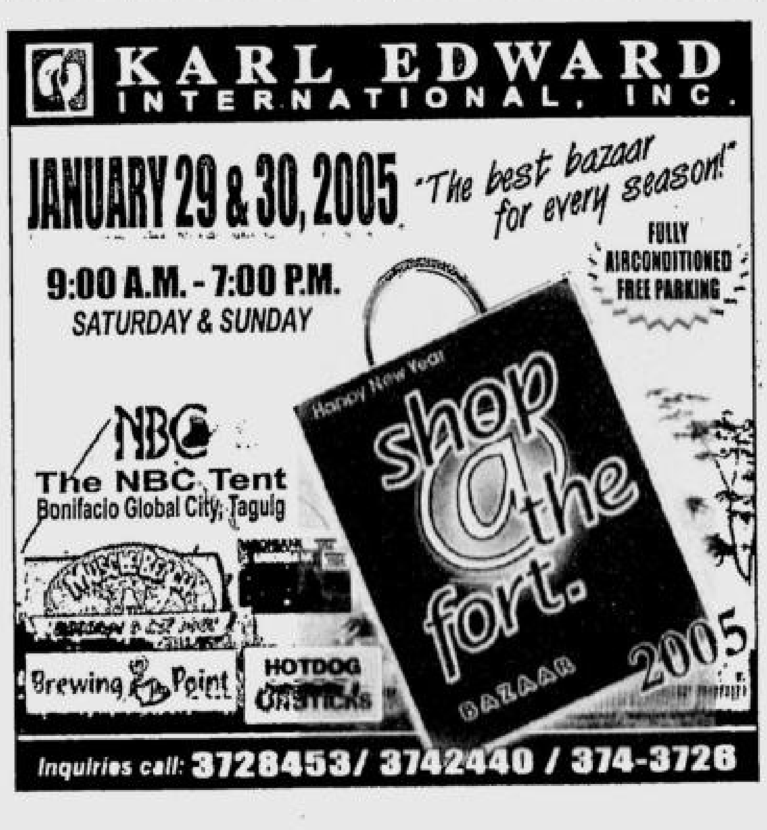

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Ericsson selected by Cingular Wireless to deploy 3G Network

CINGULAR Wireless LCC, the largest wireless carrier in the United States, has chosen Ericsson as a supplier and integrator in the buildout of Cingular's next generation voice and data network. Under the terms of the agreement, Ericsson will provide a portion of Cingular's UMTS/High-Speed Downlink Packet Access (HSDPA) packet core and radio network equipment.

"Ericsson is proud of our long-standing partnership with Cingular, which has continued from Cingular's GSM rollout to migration to 3G networks," said Carl-Henric Svanberg, president and CEO of Erricsson. "We take it to heart that Cingular trusts the capability and perseverance of our people to take them forward in delivering the services and advantages of a true 3G network to its customers."

"Ericsson has the experise required to help us deliver true 3G services to a large number of our customers," said Kris Rinne, chief technical officer for Cingular Wireless. "Their experience in deploying 3G networks throughout the world makes them an invaluable partner as we begin to deliver similar services across America.

Ericsson HSDPA represent a natural, fully standardized evolution of UMTS that will improve the peak data downlink rate to as high as 14Mbit/s and offer operators more than twice the system capacity within the current radio spectrum.

HSDPA will enable operators to deliver more advanced mobile broadband services such as Internet and corporate access. Its unprecedented data rates will allow users to download audio, video and large files or attachments significantly faster than with traditional UMTS.

Cingular Wireless will also benefit from Ericsson networks and services obtained through its recent acquisition of AT&T Wireless, which rolled out Ericsson UMTS equipment in several U.S. markets earlier this year.

Ericsson is shaping the future of Mobile and Broadband Internet communications through its continuous technology leadership. Providing innovative solutions in more than 140 countries. Ericsson is helping to create the most powerful communication companies in the world.

Read more at http;//www.ericsson.com/press. For further information , contact Geltrude Yap, Ericsson marketing communications manager tel. 632-637-1600.

GMA HOSTS DINNER FOR JOLLIBEE'S 500TH STORE CELEBRATION

Jollibee officials present to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo a map of the Philippines with Isabela City, Basilan highlighted signifying Jollibee's celebration of its 500th store opening which is located in Basilan. President Arroyo hosted a dinner in commemoration for this milestone. Shown in photo with President Arroyo are Jollibee Foods Corp (JFC) VP for real estate William Tan Untiong, JFC president and CEO Tony Tan Caktiong, JFC EVP and COO Ernesto Tanmantiong, Senator Mar Roxas, and JFC VP for restaurant systems and management Joseph Tanbuntiong.

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Bon Voyage!

AVON LADIES CONQUER PARIS, FRANCE

Global beauty company Avon gives a taste of 'la vie en rose' to its top Avon Ladies in Paris, France. Participants in the trip to the fashion capital of the world are members of Avon's distinguished General Manager's Advisory Council (GMAC), an exclusive circle of outstanding Franchise Managers. Special trips to exotic spots all over the country and the world form part of the many exciting rewards Avon gives its sales representatives. This January 2005, Avon Ladies gear up for another series of trips to Boracay, Kuala Lumpur and New York. With so many incentive programs offered, an Avon Lady gets the opportunity to travel to as many as 3 different countries in a year. Photo shows the members of the Avon GMAC with the company's top executives during their trip to Paris, France.

Keep fit and the belly flat with Lone Star Ultra Light

IT IS probably one of those highly contested issues in the diet world. Which is the best way to lose weight? Go low calorie or low carbohydrate? It seemed to draw differing opinions among health experts. Despite the facts and figures, the tussle over which works or not remains as fervent especially in recent years.

Both claim guaranteed weight loss but to serious weight watchers, the distinction is clear. Low calorie is a concept that compels dieters to cut down on food. This seemed easy and ideal but it did very little to keeping those unwanted pounds away. Followers of this concept were soon to realize that less sustenance means less energy in the body to burn fat. The metabolic rate of the body automatically shifts to a slow mode thus resulting to fatigue and weakened immune system. After all the hoopla, low calorie can only make one lose a muscle or two, and water but not fat. In a diet introduced by late Dr. Atkins, food (calorie) intake is not restricted. Well, not just any food but those low in carbohydrates. The plan adheres to a controlled carbohydrate nutritional approach that leads to a so-called 'metabolic advantage'.

Beer lovers from all over are saddled with the dilemma of wanting to enjoy such nice cold drink without having to worry about packing on extra pounds especially on the belly. While it is good to be conscious about beer's caloric content, there is little to be had compared to that which is low in carbohydrates like Lone Star Ultra Light. Boasting of 75 percent less carbohydrates than regular beer, Lone Star Ultra Light has 23 percent less carbohydrates than light beer. If provides a satisfying taste of one's favorite brew yet does not any way affect one's physique. Lone Star Ultra Light carries the "real" taste of regular beer and carefully processed to lessen the amount of carbohydrates, making it even more appealing to health conscious, serious dieters wanting to have fun indulging on their well-loved beer.

So, for beer drinkers wanting to enjoy the best of both worlds, feast on Lone Star Ultra Light. Keep fit and the belly flat.

NOTICE OF AUCTION SALE

By virtue of Section III, Article VIII of its Re-Amended By-Laws, and by resolution of the Board of Directors during its regular meeting on November 27, 2004, Valley Golf & Country Club, Inc. will cause to be sold at public auction at its Main Clubhouse, Antipolo City on Friday, February 25, 2005, at exactly 10:00 a.m., the following certificates of stock for cash to the highest bidder(s) to satisfy the principal claims of the Club, plus attorney's fees, surcharges/interests and expenses of sales thereof. The following certificates of stock pertain to delinquent accounts which have remained unpaid for a period over 120 days, posted as delinquent, have exceeded the credit limit as fixed by the Board, and have been previously notified of their delinquent accounts.

Stock Cert. No.	Account No.	Declared Acct. Name	Principal Claim
1206	0862	Ysmael Steel Mfg. Co.	PhP 785,071.49
2144	0957	Vicente T. Chua, Jr.	601,235.62
2158	0976	Victor S. de Vera	438,643 95
1266	0654	Ernesto L. Floro	257,856.60
669	0495	Emilio G. Martinez	257,844.28
601	0176	Felipe L. Liwanag	257,661.14
3338	0511	Emerito M. Ramos, Sr.	171,032.15
1547	0782	S. Kajita & Co.	205,301.11
3240	0036	Anderson Co.	101,026.35
2223	0555	Patrick Boll	105,168.35
2275	0875	Fuller O'Brien Paint Co., Inc.	93,317.75
2817	0087	Aurelio Litonjua III/Bank of Commerce	89,249.66
3137	0163	Carola Molitor	88,411.82
580	0355	Carlos Valdez	89,147.21
2375	0560	Isaias Arriola, Jr.	82,140.97

All bids shall be payable in cash immediately after the sale. The Club reserves the right to set a minimum bid price on the terms of the sale.

Antipolo City, January 13, 2005.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB, INC.

(PDI-Jan. 15, 22 & 29, 2005)

BITS Clips

Exsurge for Gen X

PAREF-Rosehill School will have its first ever concert tonight at 6 p.m at the UP Theater. The concert entitled "Exsurge" which means "Arise" in Latin, will feature today's young top performers like Rivermaya, AKAfelias, Nina, Jimmy Bondoc, Nyoy Volante and Paolo Santos. Proceeds of the event will go to the Paref-Rosehill's outreach program for the year. PAREF-Rosehill School is located in Mission Hills, Antipolo. Its main educational thrust is to build a strong home-school collaboration. For more information, call Rachelle at 697-6412, or 0919-5600645, Ticketnet - 911-5555.

Philamlife ushers in the Year of the Rooster

THE PHILIPPINE American Life and General Insurance Company (Philamlife), welcomes the coming Year of the Wood Rooster with an exciting lineup of activities in its Binondo office in Manila and in key cities nationwide. On Feb. 7, there will be a Lion and Dragon Dance, Kung Fu and Chinese Dance Performance, and fireworks display along Quintin Paredes in front of the Philamlife Binondo office at 5 p.m. Another celebration will be held on Feb. 8 at the Philamlife Office in Ortigas Avenue also at 5 p.m. Similar activities will simultaneously be held in the cities of Cebu, Iloilo, Cagayan and Davao during the week leading to the New Year.

Seminars at Bakery Fair '05

AN "Advanced Baking Seminar for Master Bakers" will be held in two sessions: Jan. 24 to 28 (part one which is for bread) and the second part for cake on Feb. 7 to 11. This is hosted by the Filipino Chinese Bakery Association Inc (FCBAI) in cooperation with the US Wheat Associates. The American Institute of baking will also give a four- day course after the Bakery Fair event dubbed as "Baking Science Update". This is sponsored by the FCBAI, in cooperation with the US Embassy Agriculture Trade Office. Bakery Fair 2005 will be held on Feb 18 to 20, at the World Trade Center. For details call the FCBAI office at 254-2518/254-2526/254-2528.

Suburbia Bar's January salvo

SUBURBIA Bar Manila gears up with its January opening salvo. Performing alternately with South Boarder is K24/7, while Chillworx plays back to back with Spi band for the rest of the Monday slots. Squib Cake and Big Nite Out takes center stage every Tuesdays, while Freeverse (except Jan. 26) and Livewire are slated every Wednesdays. Classified is paired with 7th Soul featuring Gail Blanco every Thursday. Escape and Zyncxation performs on Fridays while Saturdays, Jan. 22 and 29 features Wiseguys and Toy Symphony. All Sundays are labeled acoustic nights with After Eve. Suburbia Bar is located along Adriatico St. in Malate, Manila. For special events or other inquiries, contact them at 450-1685 or 86.

GSIS to phase out eCard center in Cubao

GSIS would soon close one of its two eCard centers in Quezon City, where enrollment has fallen below quota. The eCard center located at the Araneta Center's Expo Centro in Cubao, Quezon City would service the eCard application of GSIS members until Jan. 27 only. The pullout would enable the GSIS to transfer the eCard processing machines to newer eCard sites, particularly in the provinces, where the GSIS expects higher volumes of applicants. As an alternative, members in the Quezon City area can get their eCard from the other enrollment center at the GSIS Quezon City office located along Elliptical Road (near the Commonwealth exit). GSIS members in Metro Manila can also get their eCard from the enrollment centers at the GSIS main office in Pasay and in SM Manila, along Arroceros Street. The eCard center in SM Manila will even open on four Saturdays: On Jan. 22 and 29, Feb. and 12. The GSIS is set to open its seventh provincial eCard center in its Tacloban City branch on Feb. 3.

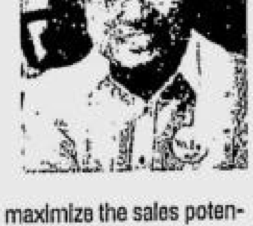
Julius Maggi Kitchen events

DISCOVER ingenious methods and recipes to recreate your holiday fares during the left-over management session at the Julius Maggi Kitchen for January. An interesting lifestyle lecture will also ensue called Kitchen Fengshui. All these will be held on Jan. 22, 25, 27, and 29 from 2 to 5 p.m. at the Julius Maggi Kitchen at the Ground Floor of the Nestle Center, 31 Plaza Drive, Rockwell Center, Makati City. Another option is a Dimsum and Paos paying cooking class to be held on Feb. 12 to 2 to 5 p.m. for only P350 per head. For reservations, call 723-7976 or 726-1016.

Windows XPerince mall tour

MICROSOFT invites mall shoppers of all ages to explore the excitement of new technology as it takes the Window XPerience on a weekend mall tour. Windows "Experience More" happens on Jan. 22 and 23 at the Atrium of SM Megamall Bldg. A and on Jan. 29 and 30 at the activity center of the Alabang Town Center. The exhibit will have booths and activities for everyone. Join the Computer X-Games Challenge and win great prizes. The day of excitement will be capped with a celebrity dating game with Pia Guanio on Jan. 22 and 29 and a special concert with Tuesday Vargas on Jan. 23 and 30.

GMA Network appoints Regional Television head



GMA Network Inc appointed Jaime P. Alanis as head of the Network's Regional Television. Alanis has been tasked to work with the provincial operations group by providing new directions to improve the ratings of all GMA provincial TV stations and recommending strategies to maximize the sales potentials of each station. Alanis has an extensive experience in sales and marketing, having been the vice president for News and Public Affairs TV Sales of GMA Marketing and Productions Inc, and sales director and consultant of various agencies. The new GMA Regional TV head will also address the needs of viewer awareness and program improvements.

Young joins Ace Saatchi & Saatchi board

ACE Saatchi & Saatchi appointed Arthur John Young Jr to its board of directors. Young is chair and CEO of Psi Technologies Holdings Inc and Psi Technologies Inc. He is also the president of Semiconductor and Electronics Industries in the Philippines Inc (Seipi). Prior to his stint at Psi, Young founded and managed a diversified transportation business in Vancouver Canada. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from the University of British Columbia in Canada.

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE
INVITATION TO BID

The Privatization and Management Office (PMO) is offering for sale, on "as-is-where-is" bases certain National Government (NG)/National Power Corporation (NPC) properties:

The assets are offered as follows:

1. PUBLIC BIDDING

Description	Indicative Price	Submission of Bids
A parcel of land with an area of 4,417 square meters located at Arnaiz Avenue corner Amorsolo St., Makati City	P 187,722,500.00	February 16, 2005 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

2. OFFER FOR SALE

Description	Price	Submission of Offers
Two parcels of land with a total area of 6,233 square meters, located at No. 1, Don Bosco St., Brgy. San Lorenzo, Makati City	OPEN PRICE	February 17, 2005 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Sealed bids/offers will be received at the specified dates from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. and immediately thereafter, the bids/offers shall be opened and tabulated in the presence of the bidders/offerors at the PMO Conference Room, 6th Floor, Privatization and Management Office, 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Interested parties are advised to deal directly with the PMO Marketing Department. Authenticated bidding documents, together with the Asset Specific Catalogues, may be secured from PMO for a nominal fee of P10,000.00.

In the event that the public bidding becomes a failure, the PMO reserves the right to accept proposals for the subject assets.

For inquiries, please contact Mr. Matthew R. de Guzman at telephone numbers 817-8762 or 818-4733.

(PDI--22, 23 & 24, 2005)

ProductFILES

Chili's celebrates 30 flavorful years

CHILI'S Grill and Bar Restaurant goes on an extended holiday season as Chili's celebrates 30 flavorful years worldwide. Throughout the years, Chili's has served good food. The Classic Fajita, which has been a signature item for years, has remained to be a favorite among regular Chili's diners. Experience fun, fresh and flavorful dining at Chili's, where they serve good food and a good time, all the time. Chili's branches are located at Missouri cor. Nevada Sts. in Northeast Greenhills; Greenbelt 1 in Ayala Center, Makati; and Tomas Morato cor. Sct. Fernandez Sts. in Quezon City.

Skinwhite hand and body lotion

BASK in the glow of skin that shines. SkinWhite Whitening Hand and Body Lotion lets you achieve whiter, stunningly beautiful skin in as fast as two weeks. Its powerful triple whitening system ReneWhite3C and sun protectors help reveal your skin's natural radiance. It also nourishes your skin with rich emollients without the sticky, greasy feel. So let your skin shine with SkinWhite Lotion.

SkinWhite
SkinWhite
SkinWhite

People, Events & Products

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aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Aries Espinosa**

Have fun, step up and get connected with Motorola

DANIELLE Ordoñez, Chips Dayrit, and Clint Albert Martinez want the best value for their hard-earned bucks. Since their phones would be their constant companions, the unit they prefer must be fully equipped with prized features. And of course, easy on the pocket. The looks will be the icing on the cake, so to speak. After all, who would want to be seen using a ghastly phone? With Motorola C380 and Motorola C651, they are having fun, stepping up and getting connected using the phones from Motorola, the global leader in wireless communication technology.

Up close and personalized: 20-year old Danielle Ordoñez is not one who would hide from the spotlight. Aspiring a life in front of the camera, she takes up Communication Arts in one of the top universities of the country. In the meantime, she dabbles as a print and commercial model. When meeting interesting people, a camera feature of C651 comes in handy too for those emergency gotta-take-a picture now moments she finds herself in. She eyes originality and wants to express herself in fashion, arts and the choices she makes in life. Her C651 jells well with all these. It allows her to create personal messages by incorporating with a picture a message in text, voice or sound. With her phone she can even prioritize as well as personalize wallpapers, ringtones, and screensavers to her delight.

Meeting priorities with ease: A banker, events organizer and professional model, Chips Dayrit has many things on his mind. The C651's functionality makes him in sync where he must be and where he should go. He also appreciates its long battery life and user-friendly interfaces that are vital for long meetings. Adept with the phones' advanced features, he has already customized his menu for loved ones. The savvy customer in him also enjoys the extra sensory experience the phone provides. For him who wants to be up to the minute about everything and everybody, be it business or personal, he has met his mobile match.

Playful yet practical: Fresh from college, Clint Albert Martinez is weighing his options. He can practice his HRIM degree, venture into business, try out a career in modeling or pursue graduate studies. Motorola C380 permits him to be both playful and practical. Its MotoMixer feature is his ticket to unleash his musical side. In addition, viewing the hottest download of games and applications in its large, high-resolution 65k color display gets him occupied for hours of entertaining fun. The most vibrant and entertaining handset in the market, the affordable, C380 also satisfies his sensible side. It ensures that he can attend to his professional, personal, and family life all in one package. Sleek in style and sophisticated in features, this tri-band even allows him to send IM and MMS his friends in most parts of the world. Clint is a wise-spender, who would often opt for items with quality than simply with brand names. But with C380, he does not even have to choose.

The three are discovering the peaks and valleys of life, enjoying and learning the essential lessons along the way. They know that C651 and C380 equate to top-notch performance.

ARANETA CENTER GETS A FACELIFT WITH GATEWAY MALL

Araneta Center regains its prominence as a top shopping destination in the country with the opening of Gateway, its flagship shopping establishment touted as a mall like no other in the world. The new Gateway Mall houses some of the top brands, shops, restaurants and commercial establishments in the country. Gateway also features world-class architectural design, expansive parking spaces and state-of-the-art Cineplex 10, ten moviehouses at par with the world's best cinemas. The opening of Gateway is part of a massive redevelopment plan for Araneta Center. The event was attended by Gateway's lesses and top executives of Araneta Center. Photo shows (from left): Julie Castro, Gateway VP for architecture and engineering; Sudhakar Thakurdesai, Gateway design consultant; Stella Marquez de Araneta; Jorge L. Araneta, chair and CEO of Araneta Group of Companies; Arsenio Yulo, and Peter Jentes, Gateway operations consultant.

MATSUSHITA GROUP OF COMPANIES (PHILS.)
WORKERS UNION - FDTU
CBA SIGNING
SEPTEMBER 15, 2004

UPHOLDING INDUSTRIAL PEACE

The officers of the Matsushita Group of Companies in the Philippines (MGCP) Workers' Union-Federation of Democratic Trade Unions (FDTU) and the management of the Matsushita Group (Phils) composed of Matsushita Electric Phils Corp (Mepco), Panasonic Mobile Communications Corp of the Phils (PMCP) and Panasonic Communications Imaging Corp of the Phils (PCIP) have signed their collective bargaining agreement (CBA) vowing to uphold industrial peace, particularly in this time of economic difficulties. Shown in photo are (from left): MGCP Workers' Union 2nd VP Elmer Oriondo, 1st VP Mon Alterado, FDTU national president Cesar Ayo, Mepco director Bartolome Sarangaya, MGCP Workers' Union president Alfredo Defante, Mepco president Seiichi Fukami, PCIP president Makoto Nakamura, PMCP president Reynaldo Lico,and PCIP managing director Gil Tanquilut.

2GO LOGISTICS BAGS FIVE AWARDS

Aboitiz freight group 2GO Logistics recently bagged numerous awards at the Global Cargo Carriers Inc (GCCI) 4th Cargo Industry Awards Night held at the grand ballroom of the Philippine Plaza Hotel in Manila. 2GO Logistics bagged five prestigious awards, namely: Platinum Category Award - Logistics and Warehousing Facilities; Platinum Category Award - Airfreight Management; Category Award - Human Resource Management; Platinum Category Award - Transport Network and Equipment Management; and Platinum Category Award - IT and Communication Infrastructure. 2GO Logistics also received two other accolades last Sept. 2004, 'Top Cargo Agent' awarded by Thai Cargo Airways and the '2003 Cargo Agent Award' given by Gulf Air Cargo for excellence in productivity and cargo sales. Shown in photo are (from left): Mario Pangan, PAL Cargo sales manager, GCL; Gener Lim, COO, 2GO Logistics; and Rusel Rubin, Emirates Cargo manager and GCCI president.

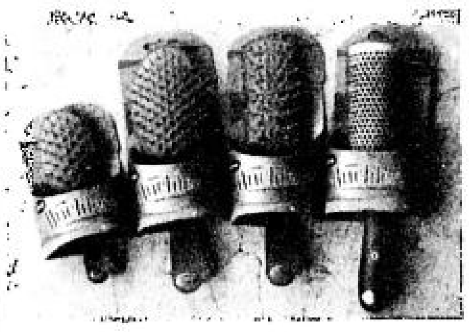
SM CITY BATANGAS WELCOMES PIZZA HUT

Pizza Hut, the world's number one pizza restaurant chain recently opened its doors to visitors of SM City Batangas. Located at the ground floor of the mall, Pizza Hut SM City Batangas is the chain's third restaurant in the province and 120th in the country. In its menu are all-time Pizza Hut favorites like American Classic, The Edge, Stuffed Crust and its signature Pan pizza; fresh salad, New Orleans Chicken Wingettes and home-made style cream of mushroom soup, among others. Joining the grand opening festivities are (from left) Batangas City Mayor Eddie Dimacuha, Bb. Pilipinas International 2004 Margaret Ann Bayot, Pizza Hut restaurant general manager Dante Buno, Bb. Pilipinas Universe 2004 Maricar Balagtas and Batangas Governor Arman Sanchez. Pizza Hut, with its tradition of excellence in product innovation, continues to reinvent and set the trend in the pizza-making sector.

Product FILES

The 'Ouchless' brush

THE GOODY "Ouchless" brush is an addition to the brand's pain-free hairstyling line. It is so named because there's no way for the bristle to snag the strands unlike other brushes. Ouchless is fitted with one-piece bristles that are attached below the surface of the brush so there's no way for hair to get caught. The soft cushion also allows for extremely easy cleaning. Another unique feature of the "Ouchless" brush is that this is the first time anyone has ever developed a brush for specific hair types, the better to keep those tresses looking good. The "Ouchless" brushes are made with three different cushions for fine hair, medium hair and thick hair, and the difference is in the number of bristles on the brush. Goody is distributed by Goody Products Phils Inc and is available in leading department stores nationwide.



A blast of excitement from Dynamite

HOW can one transform from quiet and reserved to wild and unpredictable? Find out in the latest Dynamite TV Commercial featuring an interestingly unexpected scenario that sums up the essence of Dynamite candies. With an old, silent library as backdrop, shy girl meets nerdy boy and what ensues afterwards is an explosive surprise. Just like Dynamite, a hard candy with a fun twist, the TVC features an exciting spin. It's easy to fall in love with the amusing Dynamite TVC and the refreshing blast you get from Dynamite candies with its mild-flavored outer shell and intense, flavor-filled core. Dynamite provides a unique blast of excitement in any situation. Try the Choco Mint and Melon Mint flavors and discover how this double-flavored and double-textured delight can give you a doubly exciting treat in an instant.

Renew business registrations with Globe G-Cash

THE WORLD'S first mobile business registration renewal is now up and running, marking another mobile milestone for the country. Launched in partnership with Globe Telecom, the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Land Bank of the Philippines, PAYBIR enables all Globe and TM subscribers to renew their business registration at the speed of text, and pay the corresponding fee using their G-Cash mobile wallet.

The service eliminates the need to pass through a tax collection agent as the G-Cash payment directly passes from Globe to Land Bank, the official and exclusive collection agent designated by the BIR for this endeavor. As with the regular business registration renewal process, Land Bank will generate the necessary documents and update the BIR based on the daily renewal payment reports submitted by Globe.

To renew business registration via mobile phone, subscribers must first be registered G-Cash users with at least P500 in their mobile wallets. The subscriber can then type "PAYBIR<space>500<space>MPIN<space>TIN<space>Taxpayer Branch Code<space>Revenue District Office Code<space>Registered Company Name" and send to 2882. Each transaction costs P1.

After each successful transaction, subscribers will receive a confirmation message bearing a trace number that serves as the BIR reference number. This number can then be used to access BIR Form 0605 at http://www.bir.gov.ph. The payment form will be available online two days after the G-Cash payment was made.

Globe, BIR and Land Bank recently staged successive live demonstrations of actual G-Cash business registration renewals for BIR's revenue district collectors and members of the press, respectively. The service is currently ongoing and will be available until midnight of Jan. 31.

MBC ELECTS NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The new set of officers for Murdoch Business Club were inducted last Jan. 18, at the club's principal office, the Worldnet Business Center 3/F Zeta Building Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati. The officers who will be serving two-year terms are Froilan Tejada (president), Rachelle Sun Ng (VP for internal affairs), Michael Joseph (VP for external affairs), Jennifer Bufi (treasurer), and Daisy Tan (corporate secretary). Murdoch Business Club is composed of graduates of Murdoch University's MBA Philippine offshore program, many of whom presently occupy top-level executive positions in various business sectors in the country. The club wishes to invite Murdoch University graduates from other countries who are residing in the Philippines to join the association and benefit from the group's multicultural and multi-business discipline make-up. Interested parties may contact Rachelle Ng at 636-5191-94 and rachelleng2004@yahoo.com. Shown are (standing, from left) Jack Wong and Froilan Tejada; (seated, from left) Jennifer Bufi, Rachelle Ng, and Daisy Tan.

PCSF INKS AGREEMENT WITH ICDL

The Philippine Computer Society Foundation, the certification arm of the Philippine Computer Society, inked an agreement with the International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL), the world's leading end user computer skills certification program. The signing of the agreement was held immediately ICDL was formally launched in the Philippines. The ICDL certification is the internationally recognized qualification that certifies practical competence with computer skills. It confers individuals with certified evidence of IT literacy and authenticates their up-to-date qualifications in the field. Shown during the signing are (seated from left): Bing Van Tooren, PCSF president; Cliff Lineker, general manager of operations and business, ICDL Asia Pacific Ltd; and Tim Diaz de Rivera, director general of the National Computer Center. Witnessing the signing are (from left): Titus Manuel, PCS board; PCS Foundation board members Norie Sison, Col. Bing Rivera, Alfred Francisco and Marilou Aquilizan of NCC.

ADB buys 25% of guarantee firm

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE ASIAN Development Bank has acquired a 25-percent stake in LGU Guarantee Corp., a local company that protects creditors and investors of local government unit (LGU) bonds against default.

The fresh ADB investment worth $1.3 million will boost the company's capital base to about P300 million and expand its credit cover to P3 billion, LGUGC president Jesus Tirona said in a briefing yesterday.

Since its establishment six years ago, the guarantee company has so far covered P2.8 billion worth of sub-sovereign commercial liabilities, of which P1.85 billion was outstanding.

He estimated that of the P4 billion worth of LGU bond floats, 85 percent was covered by LGUGC, originally a 51-49 percent joint venture between the Bankers Association of the Philippines and the state-owned Development Bank of the Philippines.

Tirona cited a study conducted five years ago that estimated the amount of infrastructure projects that could be financed through LGU bonds at P38 billion.

DBP president Reynaldo David said: "The entry of a multilateral institution in the LGUGC clearly sends a positive signal, particularly in the light of the recent credit rating downgrade by Standard and Poor's."

But the development of the LGU debt market has been difficult because private investors perceive sub-sovereign credit as high risk and politically sensitive. Therefore, national government agencies and government financial institutions have dominated the debt market.

With a bigger capital base, LGUGC will be able to extend its LGU guarantee business to new areas such as guarantees for LGU contractual obligations under build-operate-transfer arrangements for municipal-level private infrastructure services in the country.

During the signing ceremony, ADB director for private sector operations Alfredo Pascual said it was the first time that ADB was assuming risk on sub-sovereign commercial obligations without the backup of a central government guarantee.

"I believe Asian cities cannot sustain the financing of infrastructure investments they need without accessing private domestic savings. With decentralized governance, domestic credit markets must be capable of providing the needed finance for creditworthy local government," Pascual said.

Pascual said the ADB would be further involved in pilot projects that seek to help municipalities in developing countries gain access to private capital.

ADB senior structured finance specialist Stephen Wermert said that through the bank's involvement in LGUGC, it hoped to see the company further grow its traditional bond guarantee business but with new investors particularly from the insurance and pension funds.

"LGUGC, through its outsourced credit rating function and internal assessment of potential local government borrowers, has been able to identify LGUs that are viewed to be a good credit risk," Wermert said.

He said the ADB was impressed with the way LGUGC was conducting its business.

PLDT call center unit gets tax incentives

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE BOARD of Investments has approved the granting of incentives such as a tax holiday to a P201.6-million call center venture of one of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.'s units engaged in information and communication technology.

BOI documents showed that ePLDT Ventus Inc. is putting up a 300-seat call center at the Iloilo Supermart in Molo, Iloilo City.

ePLDT Ventus is a subsidiary of ePLDT Inc., which is, in turn, a unit of the telecommunications giant.

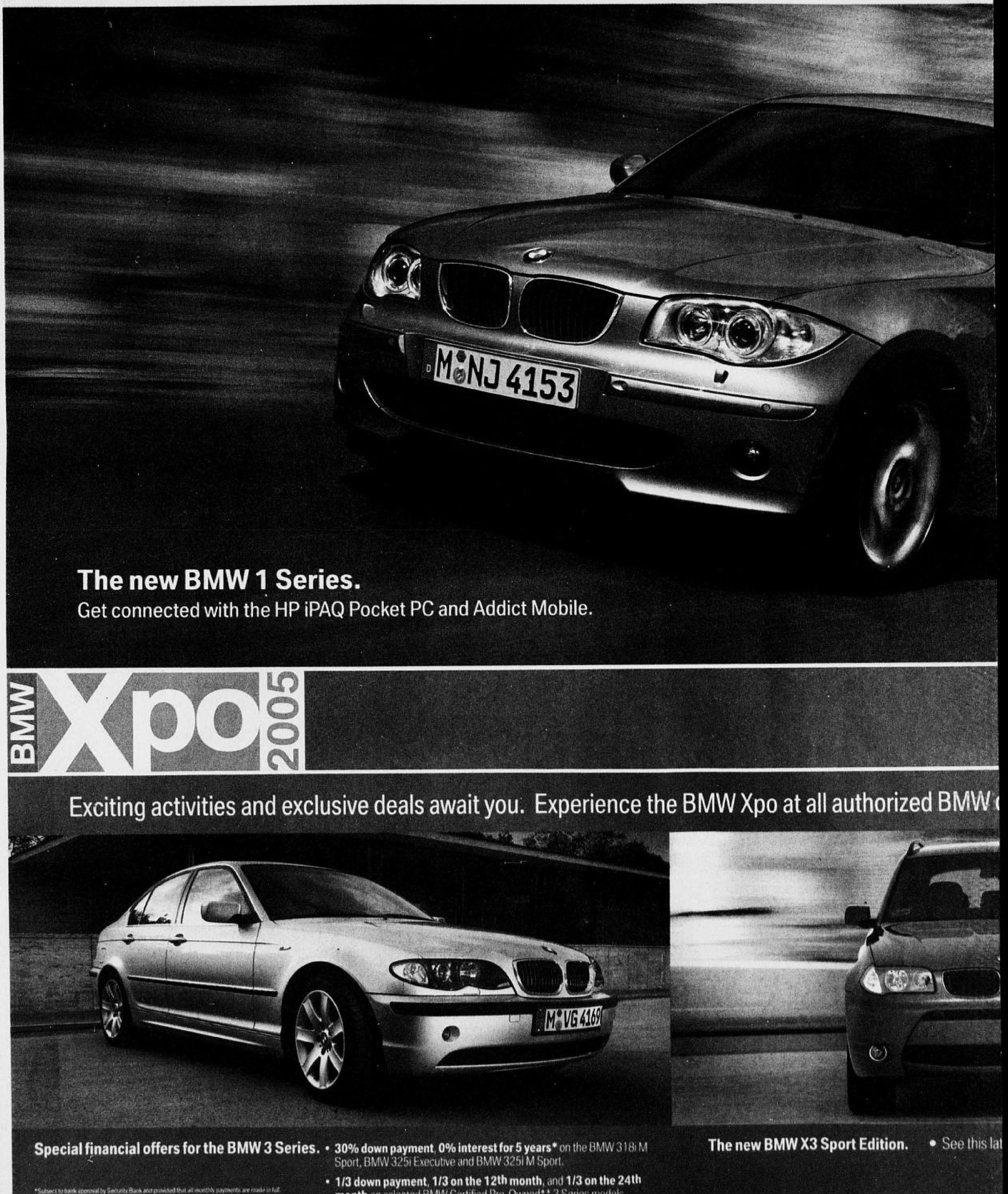
The project, slated for commercial operation starting March, is expected to employ 513 workers at full capacity.

ePLDT Ventus is funding 30 percent of the project with equity while the rest would be in loans.

The BOI said the venture qualified for registration under pioneer status because the computed investment cost per seat of $9,573—excluding working capital—complied with the agency's minimum investment requirement of $2,500 per seat for a call center project.

The planned facility is meant to provide customer contact services and all forms of business process services that would serve the needs of clients, whether they are based in the country or overseas.

In particular, the project would provide collection facilities for clients, and facilities for promotion, advertising and selling clients' goods, services and products.


The new BMW 1 Series.
Get connected with the HP iPAQ Pocket PC and Addict Mobile.

BMW Xpo 2005

Exciting activities and exclusive deals await you. Experience the BMW Xpo at all authorized BMW

Special financial offers for the BMW 3 Series.
- 30% down payment, 0% interest for 5 years* on the BMW 318i M Sport, BMW 325i Executive and BMW 325i M Sport.
- 1/3 down payment, 1/3 on the 12th month, and 1/3 on the 24th month on selected BMW Certified Pre-Owned** 3 Series models.

*Subject to bank approval by Security Bank and provided that all monthly payments are made in full.
**Previously Owned

The new BMW X3 Sport Edition.
- See this lat

Test-drive any BMW model at the BMW Xpo and get the chance to win surprise gift items from Addict Mobile and HP.

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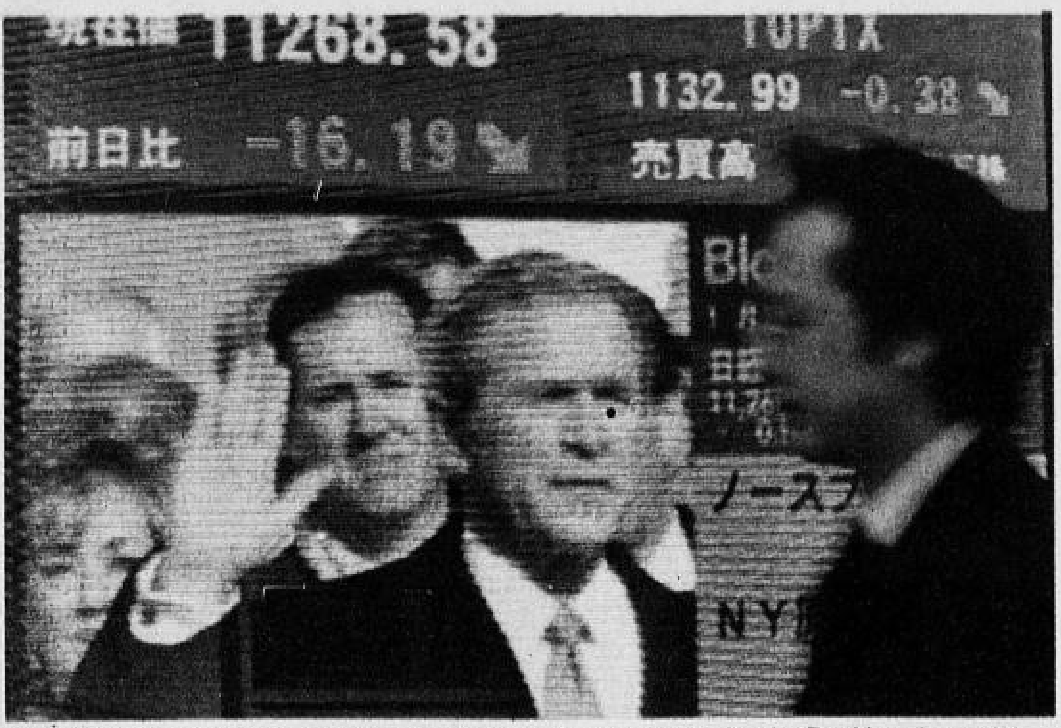
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A JAPANESE businessman walks past a financial market video screen showing President George W. Bush being sworn in for the second term in downtown Tokyo. The markets did not react to the second inauguration of Bush, with the event going as planned. The benchmark Nikkei Stock Average of 225 selected issues fell 58.70 points, or 0.52 percent, to 11,226.07 points shortly after the open. AP

Markets defy expectations

LONDON—So far this year, financial markets are not behaving as advertised. Stocks are down, bonds are up and the dollar is stronger—the exact opposite of what many large investors expected.

Entering 2005, there was a reasonably strong consensus among strategists that equities would provide modest returns, led by Asia and the euro zone, that bonds would underperform and, perhaps with less conviction, that the dollar would weaken.

A few weeks in, reality is something else entirely.

Most major stock market indices are down. The US S&P 500 has lost around 2.5 percent, Japan's Nikkei is off more than 1.75 percent and MSCI's main world index has shed more than three percent.

The euro zone has offered a mixed picture with the blue chip DJ Euro STOXX 50 down nearly a half a percent and the broader FTSEurofirst 300 up around three-quarters of a percent.

The most popular bet for equities—emerging market Asia—has disappointed. MSCI's relevant index is off two thirds of a percent, not an impressive start for the double-digit gains many are hoping for this year.

On the other side of the asset divide, meanwhile, government bonds, which were supposed to be a bad deal in a climate of low yields and potentially tighter monetary conditions, have been outperforming.

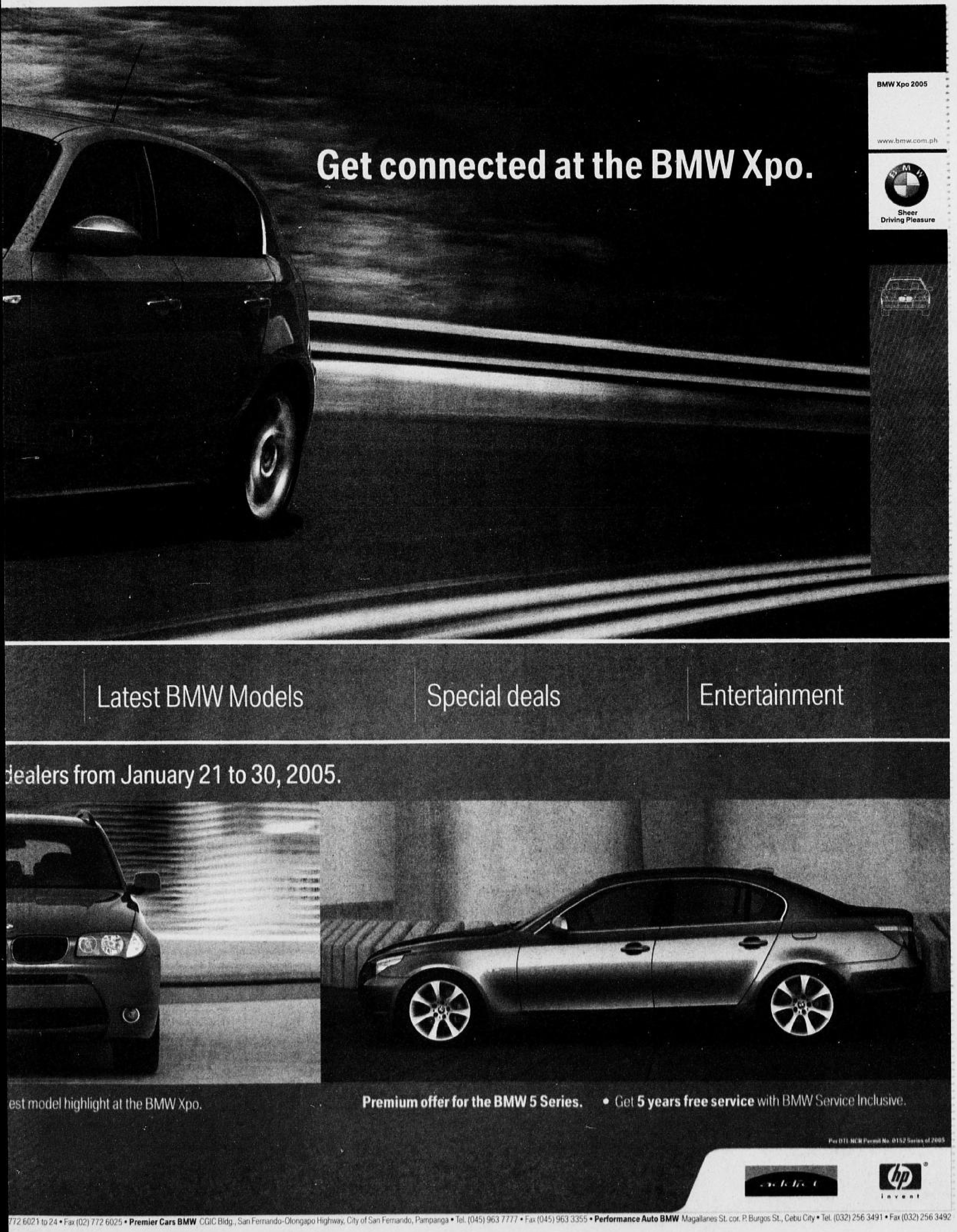
And the dollar, predicted by many to be on a fundamental slide, has strengthened against major currencies, including a roughly 4.5 percent rise on the euro.

Explanations for January's market performance are varied and to a certain extent depend on the asset under consideration. But a lot of the movements are put down by strategists to relatively sharp moves at the end of 2004.

Overshadowing all this, there is a widespread view that the US Federal Reserve has changed its tune somewhat and is now likely to be more aggressive on raising rates—which should be bad for equities and good for the dollar.

Despite the market performances, there is no immediate evidence that strategists are changing their long-term projections for 2005.

"Will we change our view? No," said David Shairp, global strategist with US firm JP Morgan Fleming Asset Management. *AP*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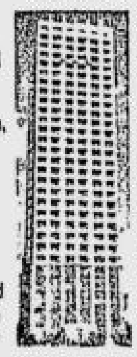

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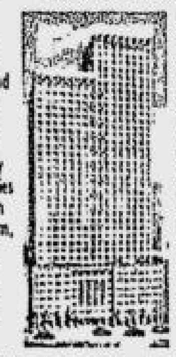

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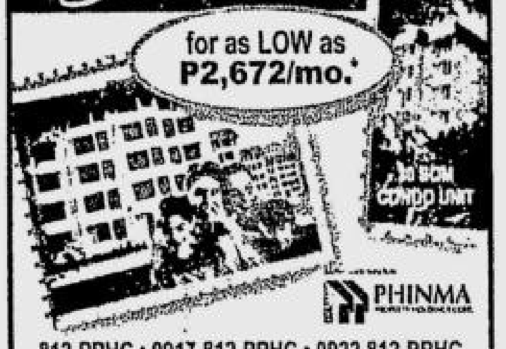

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GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

PETS

5M / 5F Dalmatian champline w/ papers 09273995937 Allan

Jap. Spitz M/F 2T 9332398

LABRADOR 0917-2468730

PUGS•WRINKLED 3725231

ROTTWEILER For Sale 2 mo. champ line with red marks complete shots and papers. Pls call 7426537 or 0917-5213323

OTHER EQUIPMENT

MACHINES FOR SALE Tel#8544230 Mrs. Marzan

WANTED TO BUY

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RTW Wholesaler 3738821

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

CAREGIVER T5280747

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION
BRANCH 90, QUEZON CITY

IN THE MATTER OF:

PETITION FOR REHABILITATION
WITH PRAYER FOR SUSPENSION
OF ACTIONS AND PROCEEDINGS
AGAINST PETITIONER

SPECIAL PROCEEDING NO. Q-03-071

MAYNILAD WATER SERVICES, INC.
Petitioner.
x--x

ORDER

In the interest of justice, this Court hereby sets for hearing the Rehabilitation Receiver's Report dated December 15, 2004 on the petitioner's petition for corporate rehabilitation and its pertinent annexes and the September 2004 Revised Rehabilitation Plan in light of the various claims and concerns of the creditors/interested parties. The hearing is set on January 31, 2005 (Monday) at 2:00 p.m.

Serve copies of this Order upon the Rehabilitation Receiver Atty. Rosario S. Bernaldo; petitioner-corporation; and all counsels and/or other interested parties.

The petitioner-corporation/Rehabilitation Receiver are ordered to cause the publication of this Order in the Philippine Daily Inquirer and the Manila Bulletin on January 22, 2005 (Saturday) in the business section of said newspapers so the latest development in this case may be known.

SO ORDERED.

Quezon City, January 3, 2005.

(Sgd.) REYNALDO B. DAWAY, C.P.A.
Presiding Judge

(PDI - Jan. 22, 2005)

RA Form No. 10.1 (LCRO)

Republic of the Philippines
Local Civil Registry Office
Baguio City

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

In compliance with Section 5 of R.A. Act No. 9048, a notice is hereby served to the public that Marilyn J. Chua has filed with this Office a petition for change of first name from MA. PAZ ALICIA to MARILYN in the birth certificate of MA. PAZ ALICIA MARTINEZ JUGANAS who was born on 27 December 1957 at Sampaloc, Manila and whose parents are Alejandro Q. Juganas and Paz B. Martinez.

Any person adversely affected by said petition may file his written opposition with this Office not later than 31 January 2005.

(Sgd.) SYLVIA R. LAUDENCIA
City Civil Registrar

(PDI–Jan. 15 & 22, 2005)

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

COOK/ACOUSTIC SINGER 6355530

EXTRA INCOME ASIAN NO. 1 IN BUSS PLS call or text 0921-4702868

Family Care Hospital Macaria Ave. Pacita Complex San Pedro Laguna is in need of a HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATOR preferably M.D. w/ experience. Send resume by mail c/o PRESIDENT FCH

Lady Dentist UE Graduate
Pref 2003-04 Board Passer
0917-9039839 / 682-0166

REAL ESTATE AGENT
with experinece and contact tel. 9280512 / 09178941622 Lopez

FEMALE

SECRETARY send resume /transcript Prudentialife 8/F Galleria Corp Ctr EDSA cor Ortigas Ave Ms Jenny Napilot

FEMALE

URGENTLY NEEDED
BOOK KEEPER
FEMALE AT LEAST 3YEARS EXPERIENCE. BRING RESUME APPLY PERSONNALY AT: DIAMOND PEARL DEV'T & MKTG INC 2438 BELARMINO ST., BANGKAL MAKATI CITY TEL 8441437/8437930

PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

CY LOPEZ
PAWNSHOP INC.
CAEG Bldg. #7611 Dela Rosa St.,Makati City #602 JP Rizal St. Makati City #15 Gen. Santos Ave. lower Bicutan Taguig Real St. Almanza Uno Las Pinas City will hold an Auction Sale on JANUARY 29, 2005 at 9:00am including all items pawned up to AUGUST 2004. - V. Zamora Jr. lic. Auctioneer.
(PDI - JANUARY 22, 2004)

PUBLIC ESTATES AUTHORITY
7th FLOOR LEGASPI TOWERS 200 BLDG., PASEO DE ROXAS, CITY OF MAKATI, METRO MANILA
Tel Nos (02) 817-47-11 • (02) 817-47-12 • (02) 817-47-13
Facsimile Nos (02) 815-2602 • (02) 815-2660 • (02) 813-1441/45
Website: www.pea.gov.ph • Email: info@pea.gov.ph

INVITATION TO BID

JANITORIAL AND CLEANING SERVICES TO MAINTAIN THE PREMISES AND BUILDING OF THE PHILIPPINE RECLAMATION AUTHORITY (PRA)

Philippine Reclamation Authority (Public Estates Authority) is inviting janitorial/cleaning offices for the bidding of the janitorial and cleaning services to maintain the premises and buildings of the PRA.

Interested parties may acquire the Terms of Reference (TOR) and bid forms from the Office of the Chairman of the BAC, 8th Floor, Legaspi Towers 200 Bldg., 107 Paseo de Roxas St., Legaspi Village, Makati City starting **January 17 up to 24, 2005** upon payment of non-refundable fee of P300.00.

The duly accomplished bid forms must be submitted on or before 10:00 a.m., **February 9, 2005** at the 7th Floor, Legaspi Towers 200 Bldg., 107 Paseo de Roxas St., Legaspi Village, Makati City. Opening of bids will be at 10:15 a.m. of the same day.

The Approved Budget Cost (ABC) for the janitorial services for ten (10) months is P1,600,000.00 inclusive of E-VAT.

Schedule of Pre-Bid Conference shall be held on **January 28, 2005** at 10:00 a.m. at the PRA's 8th Floor Conference Room.

The PRA reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any formality or technicality and to award to the bidder whose proposal is deemed more advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **ARMINDA A. ALARAS**
BAC Chairperson

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **TEODORICO C. TAGUINOD**
General Manager/CEO

(PDI--Jan. 15 & 22, 2005)

USAID

DISPOSAL SALE

USAID/Manila will conduct a Sealed Bid Sale of used residential and office furniture/equipment, Chevy '98 S-10 Pick-up and Forklift, on an "AS IS-WHERE IS" basis.

Bedroom Furniture	Living Room Furniture	Dining Room Furniture
Headboards, frames	Sofa and Easy chairs	Chest of drawers
Tables	Mattresses	Dining Room chairs
Chest of drawers	China Cabinets	Etageres
Servers	Mirrors	Bookcases
Buffets	Nightstands	Swivel Chairs
Computer tables and other miscellaneous items	Office Stands	Filing Cabinets

All items can be inspected on January 31 - February 1, 2005 from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m .and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Items can be inspected at USAID Warehouse: 2345 Aurora Blvd., (formerly Tramo St.) Pasay City. Bidforms are available at the site. Submission of bids and cash deposits (20% of the total bid) can be done at the site during the sale. Full payment and bid deposit refund will be done starting February 3, 2005 at 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the USAID/Cashier, 8th Floor, PNB Financial Center, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City.

For further information, please call Mr. Romy S. Arquisola or Mr. Alfredo Q. Daluz at Tel. Nos. 852-9684, 514-4229, 514-4234 and 514-4236.

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the ALFREDO R SALVADOR SR has been extrajudicially partitioned by his heirs as per Doc 252 Page 51 Series of 2005 before Notary Public Atty Lourdes T. Pagayatan (PDI - Jan 8, 15 & 22, 2005)

INVITATION TO BID "AS IS WHERE IS"

Damaged Motor Vehicles

1997 Mitsubishi Lancer / USP-593
2002 Honda Civic Lxi / XEV-946
2002 Mitsubishi Adventure / XFF-534
Various defective small appliances (electric fan, rice cooker, flat iron, gas & electric stove, etc.)

For particulars, call Philam Ins. Co., Inc./ Dick Cariño. Tel.#878-54-57

SEND YOUR RESUMÉS INSTANTLY

JOB Market ONLINE

VISIT US AT
www.jobmarketonline.com

Extra Joss, an Energy Drink in Powder, one of our clients is looking for **Sales Promotions Executive** for Cabuyao, Pampanga and Iloilo Operations.

We need the following competent individuals to work with our clients on their marketing support activities from planning, project implementation up to the analysis and evaluation of the results thereof.

Qualifications:

SALES PROMOTION EXECUTIVE

(Supervisory Position)

- Male / Female
- Age 27-35 years old
- College graduate (preferably Management graduate)
- Have experienced working in the distributor or principal.
- Honest, independent & hard working.
- Flexible to socialize & creative.
- Have knowledge to handle people

Please send your application letter, comprehensive resumé stating salary history, 2x2 picture and transcript of records at:

DANCERG MARKETING
AND PROMOTIONS SERVICES
3rd Floor, FCC Building
7494 Santillan Street, Makati City

For Iloilo applicants interview will be on February 1, 2005.
Please contact Raquel Galve at 500-5962;
Cel No. 0920-2606646

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
SUGAR REGULATORY ADMINISTRATION
North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
P.O. Box 70, U.P. Diliman, Quezon City
TIN 000-784-336-000

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) through its Bidding and Awards Committee (BAC) invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for the:

SUPPLY OF LABOR, MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT FOR THE INSTALLATION OF ONE (1) UNIT MACHINE ROOMLESS ELEVATOR FOR THE FOUR (4) STOREY SRA ANNEX BUILDING
Approved Budget for the Contract – Php 2,700,000.00

Schedule of Bidding Activities

Issuance of Eligbility Requirements	January 24, 2005 – February 4, 2005 7:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. SRA Bidding Secretariat 3rd Floor Annex Building Sugar Regulatory Administration North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Submission of Eligbility Requirements	February 5-11, 2005
Issuance of Bid Documents	February 14-16, 2005 for a non-refundable fee of Php 2,000.00
Pre-Bid Conference	February 17, 2005 9:00 A.M. Social Hall, Sugar Regulatory Administration North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Submission & Opening of Bid Envelopes	March 2, 2005 9:00 A.M. Social Hall, Sugar Regulatory Administration North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

All particulars relative to the Eligibility, Bid bond, Pre-bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contracts shall be governed by the provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations and other applicable government rules and regulations.

The SRA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expense incurred in the preparation of the bids.

The SRA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or informality therein or accept any bid(s) or offer(s) which it may consider to be advantageous and beneficial to the government.

(Sgd.) JAMES C. LEDESMA
Administrator

(PDI – January 22 & 29, 2005)

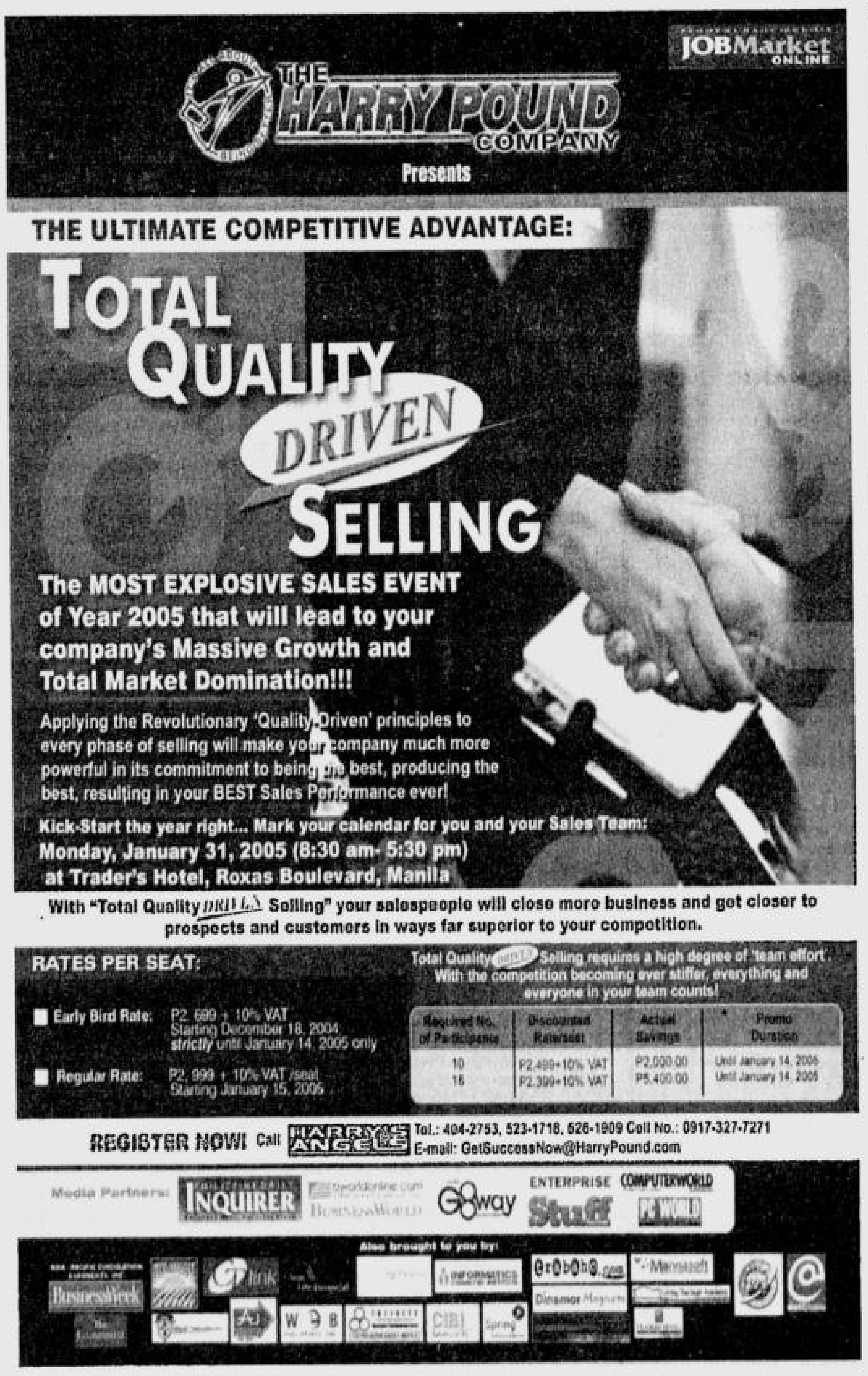
POEA 24-HR HOTLINES 722-1144 • 722-1155

The 16th U.P. Job Fair

THE 16th University of the Philippines Job Fair had its motorcade Jan. 20, from 12 to 1 in the afternoon, around the UP campus. It started from the College of Business Administration and passed by the different colleges' around the campus like the College of Engineering, Mass Communication, Fine Arts, and Social Science and Philosophy. People from UP Junior Philippine Institute of Accountants as well as from the Office of Counseling and Guidance distributed flyers to students along the way.

The Notch UP 2005: The 16th University Job Fair organized by UP Office of Counseling and Guidance (UP OCG), UP Junior Philippine Institute of Accountants (UP JPIA), and UP Alumni Association (UPAA) will push through on Jan. 24 to 28, 8-5 pm at the Ang Bahay ng Alumni, UP Campus, Diliman.

All students especially those who are graduating are invited to this grand event. They are requested to bring several copies of their resume during the event.



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Applying the Revolutionary 'Quality-Driven' principles to every phase of selling will make your company much more powerful in its commitment to being the best, producing the best, resulting in your BEST Sales Performance ever!

Kick-Start the year right... Mark your calendar for you and your Sales Team:
Monday, January 31, 2005 (8:30 am- 5:30 pm)
at Trader's Hotel, Roxas Boulevard, Manila

With "Total Quality DRIVEN Selling" your salespeople will close more business and get closer to prospects and customers in ways far superior to your competition.

RATES PER SEAT:

■ Early Bird Rate: P2, 699 + 10% VAT
Starting December 18, 2004
strictly until January 14, 2005 only

■ Regular Rate: P2, 999 + 10% VAT /seat
Starting January 15, 2005

Total Quality DRIVEN Selling requires a high degree of 'team effort'. With the competition becoming ever stiffer, everything and everyone in your team counts!

Required No. of Participants	Discounted Rate/seat	Actual Savings	Promo Duration
10	P2,499+10% VAT	P2,000.00	Until January 14, 2005
15	P2,399+10% VAT	P5,400.00	Until January 14, 2005

REGISTER NOW! Call HARRY'S ANGELS Tel.: 404-2753, 523-1718, 626-1909 Cell No.: 0917-327-7271
E-mail: GetSuccessNow@HarryPound.com

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1. Email : corp.training_rp@n21.com; marivical_rp@n21.com
2. Call : 02-4330021 or 02-4343678 ext. 104 and 107. Look for Benji, Baby or Regie.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP DATES

February 10 – 11
February 24 – 25
March 10 – 11
March 17 - 18

"When I experienced this training, I saw leadership principles I've taught all my life come to life."
- JOHN C. MAXWELL

Client Testimonials

"I would strongly encourage anyone in management to pursue an opportunity to attend this leadership course. The greatest encouragement, however, would be to the senior leadership of an organization to come and understand these principles and be able to role model them in the organization... so that when people come back they can see a picture of what it looks like in their own four walls."
-- Tami Helm, President, Borders Books

What I really found unique about this workshop is that the interaction has been outstanding... The principles are pragmatic and yet purposeful and inspiring... the benefit of this course is its values-based approach"
-- Richard Graham, Hewlett Packard

"Best subject matter and class I have ever attended. My friends, family and employees are wondering what happened to me."
-- Kevin Williams, Director for International Sales, Wal-Mart & Sam's Club

"This was a really good experience to come out and hear what other leaders are doing at other companies, and to have a chance to learn how they are resolving their leadership issues."
-- Darlene Quinoy, IT Manager, Delta Airlines

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Etihad Airways are looking for Flight Attendants to join our prestigious team. If successful, you will be based in Abu Dhabi, the Capital of the UAE, where you will benefit from a tax-free salary, furnished accommodation and numerous other benefits appropriate to the position.

In order to qualify you must stand at least 1.6m tall, be under 30 years of age (32 if you have current airline experience) and be fluent in the English language. Other languages would be beneficial. Applicants must also be medically fit and show evidence of educational attainment to High School Certificate level. Previous experience in a customer care environment will be a definite advantage.

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before 2nd February at
www.careers.etihadairways.com
We will contact individuals
for an appointment.

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A PRESTIGIOUS AND DYNAMIC GROUP OF COMPANIES IS OFFERING A SATISFYING AND REWARDING CAREER TO HIGHLY COMPETENT PROFESSIONALS TO FILL THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS

CHEMICAL, CIVIL, ELECTRICAL, (24) INDUSTRIAL and MECHANICAL ENGINEERS

- Male, not more than 40 years old
- Licensed, with very good scholastic record from a prestigious school or university
- With more than 5 years work experience
- With excellent communications skills, both oral and written
- Computer literate and very familiar with ISO/TQM standard
- Flexible, hardworking and can work with minimum supervision

AUDITORS (2)

- Male, not more than 40 years old
- Accounting graduate, preferably a CPA, from a reputable school or university
- At least five (5) years experience as an Auditor
- Comprehensive knowledge in financial statements preparation, feasibility studies, and taxation
- Experience in external audit is an advantage
- Familiar with different computerized accounting systems
- Honest, dependable, industrious, willing to work long hours

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT/SECRETARY

- College graduate and with good scholastic record preferably from UP, Ateneo, La Salle, UA & P
- Must have at least 5 to 10 years related work experience
- Not more than 35 years old
- Excellent in oral and written communications
- Good typing skills and computer literate
- Can be delegated to perform highly responsible duties and able to organize office systems and procedures
- Patient, flexible in time schedule and dedicated to work
- Ability to work with least supervision, results oriented, hardworking, and willing to work long hours
- Preferably a resident of San Juan, Quezon City, Makati or within Metro Manila

RECEPTIONIST

- Not more than 30 years old
- With smart appearance and good communication skills
- With pleasant and friendly personality and should be courteous
- Flexible, can work long hours and under pressure
- Should be efficient and well-organized and can work with minimum supervision
- Must have more than 3 years work experience in the same field

MOTORPOOL SUPERVISOR

- Male, not more than 45 years old
- Preferably a Mechanical Engineering graduate with good scholastic record
- Must have at least three (3) years comprehensive experience in Motorpool supervision
- With knowledge in repair of trucks, especially Isuzu and I.H.
- Reliable, a team player and can work long hours and under pressure
- Willing to relocate for provincial assignment

COMPANY DRIVERS (6)

- At least 28 to 35 years old
- At least five (5) years experience in driving private vehicles as company driver
- Must be willing to drive 10-wheeler-type trucks
- Must be familiar with Metro Manila routes
- Knowledge in trouble shooting is an advantage
- Familiar with driver etiquette, with pleasing personality, alert

ARCHITECTS (2)

- Licensed; with at least 3-5 years of relevant work experience
- Must have a background in Autocad; knowledgeable in MS applications
- Must be 25-35 years old
- Exposure in design of formworks, estimating and project costing
- Must have experience in design of commercial, residential buildings and site development

CHEMISTS (4)

- Graduate of Chemical Engineering / Chemistry
- Keen on details
- Has extensive background in water treatment and waste water treatment process.
- Preferably supervisor / more than 5 years of experiences specializing in Chemistry equivalent
- Expertise on Research and Development

WELDERS

- Must be 22 to 30 years old
- Must have worked for at least two (2) years
- Must be 3G/6G level

HEAVY EQUIPMENT MECHANIC

- Experienced in major overhaul; able to repair engines, transmission, break system; rebuilding and heavy equipment preventive maintenance
- Preferably with some electrical background
- 28 to 40 years old
- At least five (5) years experience in related work

MAINTENANCE MECHANICS (3)

- Preferably a mechanical engineer
- With experience in production equipment maintenance to include combustion and rotating equipment
- Male, 28-35 years of age
- Willing to work long hours and / or shifting schedule
- Willing to accept provincial assignment

PROCESS OPERATORS (4)

- Preferably a chemical engineer, mechanical engineer is acceptable
- With production experience in the operation of a Chemical Plant
- Male, 28-35 years of age
- Willing to work long hours and / or shifting schedule
- Willing to accept provincial assignment

ELECTRICIAN (1)

- Licensed master electrician or an electrical engineer
- With experience in Industrial Plant with knowledge in motor controls
- Male, 28-35 years of age
- Willing to work long hours and / or shifting schedule
- Willing to accept provincial assignment

FORKLIFT OPERATORS (3)

- Vocational graduate
- With at least 2 years experience and with knowledge in equipment maintenance
- Male, 28-35 years of age
- Willing to work long hours and / or shifting schedule
- Willing to accept provincial assignment, trustworthy and willing to work overtime

FITTERS

- Male, 25 to 35 years old
- Must have at least three (3) years experience in pipefitting in industrial plants
- Must be able to read or interpret piping drawings
- At least high school or vocational graduate related to pipefitting works

Qualified applicants are invited to submit their comprehensive resumé, most recent 2x2 picture, transcript of records, certificates of employment at:

Suite 306, Bonaventure Plaza, Ortigas Ave., Greenhills, San Juan, M.M.

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

The Office of the Representative of the United Nations Population Fund, Manila is seeking applications from competent candidates to fill the post of

National Professional Project Personnel (NPPP) for Reproductive Health (RH).

Duties and Responsibilities:
Under the supervision of the UNFPA Representative, the NPPP for Reproductive Health is the focal point of UNFPA-supported activities at the national and provincial levels and is expected to administer and provide technical expertise to UNFPA-supported programmes and projects that are responsive to the country's need in the area of reproductive health (RH). More specifically, the NPPP for RH:

- Provides assistance to the RH component, as well as the RH aspects of the Population and Development Strategies, Advocacy and Adolescent Reproductive Health programmes as follows:
  - provides strategic guidance for a pro-poor, gender-responsive, rights-based RH programmes;
  - provides technical assistance and guidance to all executing and implementing agencies in the area of RH;
  - prepares consolidated report on RH activities while identifying bottlenecks and recommendations for improving programme/project operations.
- Assists in review and revision of programme/project document drafts to ensure completion of all requisite documents and compliance with policies and guidelines.
- Reviews, monitors, evaluates and provides technical assistance to projects under the RH programmes at national and provincial levels.
- Reviews and monitors programme/project budget.
- Promotes policy dialogue with stakeholders.
- Shares strategic state-of-the-art knowledge on RH with colleagues and counterparts.
- Coordinates meetings and workshops related to country programme activities.
- Performs other programme-related duties as may be required.

Essential Specifications and Competencies:

- Minimum academic degree: Master's Degree in the social sciences preferably in Public Health.
- Ten years or more of relevant, demonstrated professional experience in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects in the area of population and reproductive health.
- Working experience at provincial and municipal levels.
- Ability to analyze complex issues related to socio-economic or public health development objectives, especially in the areas of population and reproductive health.
- Strong initiative, sound judgment and demonstrated managerial capabilities.
- Strong proven capacity for conceptual innovation, relationship building/partnering and networking, promoting teamwork and task management.
- Behavior critical to successful performance in an organizational culture such as integrity and corporate commitment, leveraging diversity, stewardship of public resources, advocacy of organizational values, cultural sensitivity and adaptability in a multi-cultural environment, commitment to learning and knowledge-sharing and client orientation are highly desirable.

Applicants are requested to send their application letters indicating post title together with completed UN Personal History Forms (P.11), available at www.unfpa.org.ph/jobs to:

The Country Representative
United Nations Population Fund
P.O. Box 7285 DAPO
1300 Domestic Road
Pasay City, Metro Manila
Or through email at officemail@unfpa.org.ph

Salary: Negotiable based on experience and qualifications

Deadline for submission of applications: 4 February 2005 (Only short-listed applicants will be notified).

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

The Office of the Representative of the United Nations Population Fund, Manila is seeking applications from competent candidates to fill the post of

National Professional Project Personnel (NPPP) for Operations Research and Monitoring & Evaluation (OPME)

Duties and Responsibilities:
Under the supervision of the UNFPA Representative, the NPPP for Operations Research and Monitoring & Evaluation is expected to provide technical expertise to evaluations and surveys of UNFPA-supported programmes and projects that are responsive to the country's need in the area of reproductive health (RH), population and gender.

More specifically, as part of the Country Office Team, the NPPP for Operations Research and Monitoring & Evaluation will undertake the following duties and responsibilities.

As focal person for monitoring and evaluation and research, provides assistance to the Reproductive Health (RH). Advocacy and Population and Development Strategies (PDS)g sub-programme component projects as follows:

- Provides technical assistance and guidance to all executing and implementing agencies of the 6th Country Programme (6CP) in the area of Operations Research, monitoring and evaluation;
- Prepares consolidated reports on Operations Research activities of the 6CP, while identifying bottlenecks and recommendations for improving programme/project operations;
- Develops a design for Operations Research for RH, Adolescent Reproductive Health (ARH) and Advocacy at the national, regional and component provincial and NGO levels.
- Facilitates and assists in the development of the Operations Research agenda for the 6CP.
- Leads the implementation and execution of the Operations Research and monitoring & evaluation framework of the 6CP.
- Develops and implements mechanisms for scientific validation of project/programme reports and experiences of the 6CP.

As a Technical Adviser, operationalizes and improves the monitoring & evaluation component of the 6CP and its component projects:

- Enhances existing monitoring tools and checklists developed for the RH, ARH and Advocacy programmes/projects.
- Enhances and finalizes the tools, in consultation with the RH, ARH and Advocacy programme advisors, staff and partners.
- Facilitates and manages meetings, consultations and workshops pertaining to the Operations Research and monitoring & evaluation component of the 6CP. Furthermore, he/she ensures maintenance of the Results-Based Management (RBM) adaptation of partners and accountability at all programming levels through the use of the logframe as a monitoring & evaluation tool.

As the Adviser for Research and Monitoring & Evaluation, focuses on developing ways on sustaining 6CP initiatives through the formulation of effective ways on local partner ownership and cooperative linkages with local and national partners.

Reviews, monitors, evaluates and provides technical assistance to projects/programmes at national and provincial levels, to ensure their compliance with UNFPA policies and procedures:

- Undertakes project monitoring activities like meetings and field visits and prepares monitoring reports which shall identify bottlenecks and recommends ways for improvement of project operations;
- Reviews correspondence and other documents and takes routine follow-up actions in consultation and coordination with other programme advisers and partners and drafts a variety of routine materials such as letters and memoranda;
- Reviews sub-programme/project reports and outputs and provides necessary guidance to ensure compliance with project requirements for monitoring & evaluation.

Performs other programme-related duties as may be required.

Essential Specifications and Competencies:

- Minimum academic degree: Master's Degree in the social sciences preferably in Research and Monitoring & Evaluation.
- Five years or more of relevant, demonstrated professional experience in project development and management in the field of Operations Research and Monitoring & Evaluation.
- At least three years experience and specialized knowledge in ARH.
- Strong proven capacity for conceptual innovation, relationship building/partnering and networking, promoting teamwork and task management.
- Behavior critical to successful performance in an organizational culture such as integrity and corporate commitment, leveraging diversity, stewardship of public resources, advocacy of organizational values, cultural sensitivity and adaptability in a multi-cultural environment, commitment to learning and knowledge-sharing and client orientation are highly desirable.

Applicants are requested to send their application letters indicating post title together with completed UN Personal History Forms (P.11), available at www.unfpa.org.ph/jobs to:

The Country Representative
United Nations Population Fund
P.O. Box 7285 DAPO
1300 Domestic Road
Pasay City, Metro Manila
Or through email at officemail@unfpa.org.ph

Salary: Negotiable based on experience and qualifications

Deadline for submission of applications: 4 February 2005 (Only short-listed applicants will be notified).

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We, the family of the late

P. B. DIONISIO
(PAULINO BAGUISA ADOR DIONISIO)

June 22, 1913 to January 03, 2005

wish to convey our sincerest gratitude and appreciation to all those who in various ways condoled with us in our time of bereavement. We truly thank you for the masses and prayers offered for Papang, the flowers and other generous donations. Most of all, for spending time to support & comfort us in our moment of grief.

Your kindness has been a valuable source of strength & consolation...

God Bless you all

Purita (Mamang) S. Dionisio, children, children-in-law, grandchildren & spouses & great grandchildren.

We love you ... We miss you ... We'll never forget you

COLONEL BENJAMIN G. TOTANES PA (Ret)

on his First Death Anniversary
(January 22, 2004)

His wife and children request his friends and relatives to offer prayers for the eternal peace of his soul.

In Christ all shall be made alive — *Corinthians 15:22*

Col. CONSTANCIO R. VELASCO SR. (Ret.)

Has gone to his eternal rest in the peace of our Lord on January 21, 2005 at the age of 94.

His beloved wife **Ana Tuason (†)**, children:

Emmanuel and Rosie Fernandez
Constancio and Ester Paner (†)
Edgardo and Dina Laurel
Virgilio and Malou Berba
Anita and Alex Paves

Grandchildren and great grandchildren, other relatives and friends request the pious readers for prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Christ the King, Greenmeadows, Quezon City. Interment will be in Imus, Cavite Cemetery, date to be announced later.

MONSERRAT MAGSALIN FERNANDO, M.D.
"MORY"

Has peacefully joined her Creator on January 20, 2005 at the age of 76.

Her loving children **Connie & Vincent Jayme Jr., Emy, Jean & Ronnie Cansanay, Anna, Bong & Babette Soriano, Tonette & Paul Regondola, Ferdie & Emily Santiago**; grandchildren, great grandchildren, nephews, nieces, other relatives & friends request the pious readers to pray for her eternal rest and everlasting happiness.

Her remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G., Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on January 25, 2005 at the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park, Baesa, Caloocan City after the 7:30 a.m. Mass.

"I am the resurrection and the life.
He who believes in Me, will live,
even though he dies; and whoever
believes in Me will never die."
John 11: 25-26

In Loving Memories

LUCIA "Nanay Lucing" INTON Vda. De VIACRUSIS

December 13, 1924 - January 22, 1999
*On her **Sixth Death Anniversary***

Her husband **Alfredo Sr.** (†); children **Cesar** and **Belen**, **Ding** and **Miriam**, **Bot** and **Nessy**, **Beng** and **Nanding** (†), **Jess** and **Rosie**, **Chie** and **Tess**, **Boy** and **Erma**, **Viring** and **Ave**, **Bong** and **Lea**; grandchildren **Vic**, **Jun**, **Albert**, **Jean**, **Rachelle**, **Mydee**, **Paul**, **Randy**, **Eric**, **Hernan**, **Tek**, **Lorie**, **Jay R**, **Mutya**, **Anne**, **Leo**, **Francis**, **Andy**, **Beth**, **Lucia Rin**, **Christian**, **Matty**, **AJ**, **Janet**, **Andrea Beatrice** and **Andrew Benedict**; and great grandchildren request other relatives and friends to remember her in their prayers.

The Holy Mass will be offered at the following churches on January 22, 2005:

Dolores Church, San Fernando, Pampanga	7:30 AM
St. Anthony Church, Matain, Subic, Zambales	7:30 AM
Carmelite Monastery, Subic, Zambales	6:00 AM - 7:00 AM
St. Joseph Parish Church, Olongapo City	4:00 AM - 5:00 AM
Columban Church, Olongapo City	4:30 AM - 5:30 AM
Immaculate Concepcion Parish Chuch	6:00 AM - 7:00 AM

(Mass to be held at Filmixco Compound, Sindalan, San Fernando, Pampanga at 8:00 AM)

ROMEO SABIO RANIN

who died on January 20, 2005 at the age of 67.

His remains now lie in state at Chapel Venice, Loyola Memorial Chapels, Sucat, Parañaque.

Interment will be on Tuesday, 25th of January at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

Thank You

We thank our relatives and friends who have condoled with us in our bereavement upon the demise of our beloved

ELISA REYES-TABANIAG, M.D.

Thank you all for the prayers and songs you lifted to God for the repose of her soul, for the flowers you sent, for the time you spent during the wake, and for all your help-monetary or otherwise-you extended to us.

REYES-TABANIAG FAMILY

ANTONIO CHACON OCAMPO

Peacefully joined the Lord on January 20, 2005 at the age of 72.

His beloved wife Fery Echavia Ocampo; his children Raynatus (Kookie) & Lesley, Ma. Dolce Core (Sweetheart), Lourdjean (Honey) & Dr. Sol, Rijeus (Choco) & Olive, Rexelsus (Poopsie) & Maryrose; brothers & sisters, grandchildren, nephews & nieces, request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Nacional Memorial Homes, G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City. Interment will be on January 23, 2005, Sunday, 9 a.m. at La Loma Cemetery, Caloocan.

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2 Corinthians 5:8

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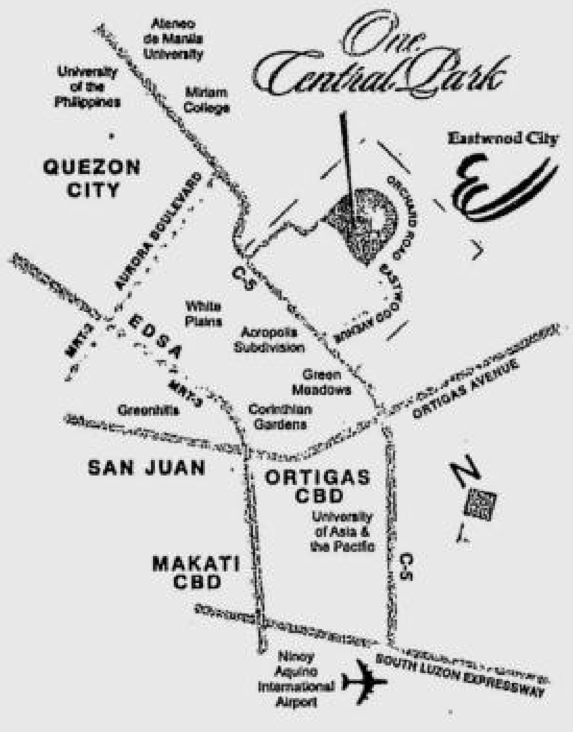
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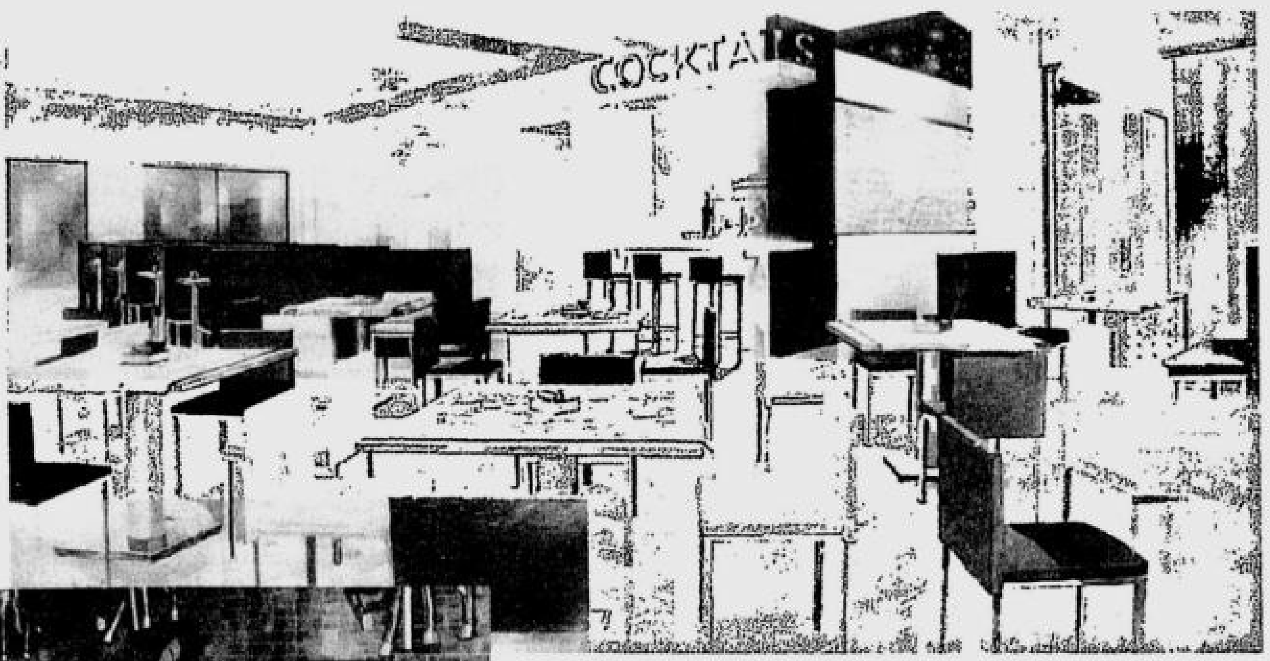
PROPERTY

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

Creating the proper dining ambience



PROPER restaurant design and layout are taken into consideration including what chair and table types to use.

Burgoo
BURGOO
BURG

THE AMBIENCE at the latest Burgoo restaurants is very simple to let the food come forward.

PROPER strategic lighting can enhance the atmosphere for patrons and customers.

By Charles E. Buban

WHETHER you want to put the spotlight on your food or your service, creating the proper dining ambience is important nowadays.

Esthetics has become an integral part of dining out so more restaurant operators today are placing as much importance on the setting in which they serve their food as they are on the food itself.

"To survive today's competitive market, it's not just enough for restaurants to offer excellent food, they also must provide attractive surroundings and convivial atmosphere," says Albert Alavera, managing director of Specialty Restaurants Inc., the group behind Burgoo chain of restaurants and Chinese Monk restaurants.

Indeed, restaurant operators like SPI, are investing more than ever before in restaurant design and decor as they strive to create a setting that will set them apart from the competition.

Turning to designers

This is why restaurateurs oftentimes turn to designers to create the perfect package.

"Food aside, the look of a place can make or break a restaurant since good design grabs customers' attention, and makes them feel they are somewhat special. What is on the plate might be perfection itself, but if the surroundings are uncomfortable, few will be tempted to enter the door to try it again," says the US-trained Alavera who worked with interior designer Grace Milan in conceptualizing the latest Burgoo restaurants located at Gateway Mall in Cubao and Connecticut in Greenhills.

According to Alavera, each of their restaurants offer a unique ambience.

"For example, what we adapted at the Podium is modern while the one in Rockwell is eclectic (a style that harmoniously combines furniture and accessories of various styles and periods)," reveals Alavera.

Color motif and lighting

Besides creating the proper ambience, Alavera also placed a premium on the choice of color motif and lighting.

"Lighting has a crucial role in creating the appropriate atmosphere so one should be cognizant of its importance in creating the right feel," says Alavera.

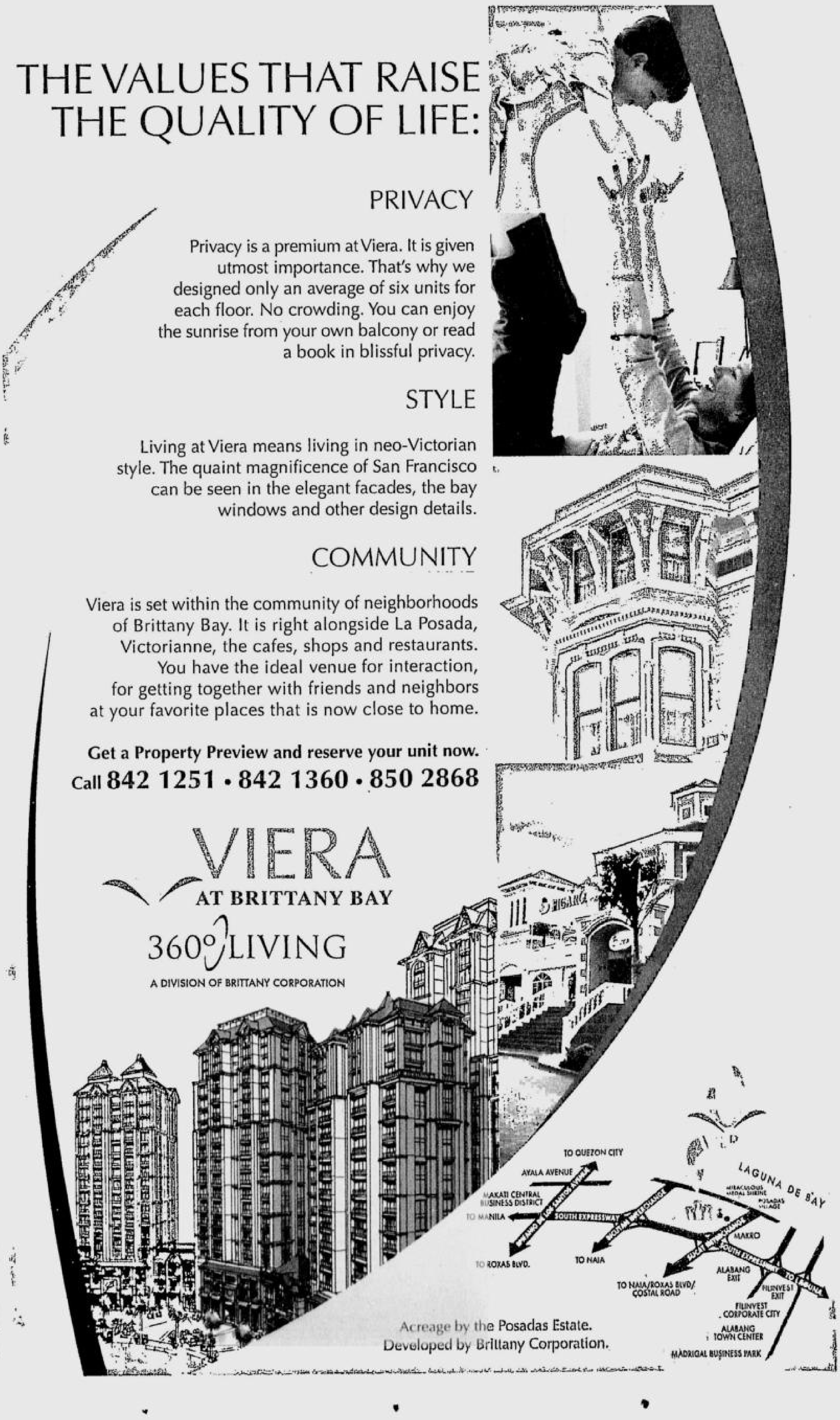
He adds that lighting may even help encourage guests to linger since it could create a comfortable feeling," says Alavera who used warm lighting to complement the (mostly) warm hues that he used in most of Burgoo's restaurants.

There's a reason for selecting a particular design for each restaurant.

Using various designs

In each of our Burgoo restaurants, Alavera intended their diners to feel like they are in a "proper" restaurant and not in some house that has been converted a bit.

He adds: "I want them to feel, 'this place is so beautiful,' and be excited about it. So that when we serve the food, everything comes together as it should."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THE PHILIPPINE World Building and Construction Exhibition (Worldbex) continues to live up to its name as Asia's biggest and most-attended construction trade fair by organizing the biggest yet exposition on March 16-20 at three venues.

Worldbex will be held at the World Trade Center Metro Manila (WTCMM), the adjoining Philippine Trade Training Center in Pasay City and the air-conditioned tent located at the east parking of WTCMM.

Most comprehensive

On its decade run, Worldbex gathers the most comprehensive product lines and services of construction materials and technologies from here and abroad. It will feature anew products from countries such as Australia, Malaysia, Korea, China, Taiwan, France, US, Europe, New Zealand, Canada, Germany and United Kingdom, living up to its trademark as Asia's ultimate trade fair in town.

Worldbex 2005 expects more than 500 exhibitors and 60,000 visitors. As the gateway to the expanding Philippine market, it is being supported by 23 leading industry associations and reputable trade offices.

It also boasts of a visitor profile, which includes industry key players, trade professionals, contractors, manufacturers, distributors, exporters, importers, dealers, construction consultants and end-users who come to view the products of exhibitors from over 20 countries.

Joseph Ang, founding chair of Worldbex Services International (WSI), anticipates that the five-day run this year will surpass the last nine years in terms of exhibitor participation and visitor attendance.

10th year

"If you thought last year's expo was a huge success, visit us this March when we celebrate our 10th year," he said.

Worldbex started in 1996 with 300 exhibitors and 30,000 visitors. It features topnotch building materials, equipment and services, interior design and renovation, security and fire equipment, construction promotion, information technology and telecommunications for government and private institutions' needs at best costs.

Every year Worldbex promotes innovative products and technologies as well as expanding business matching opportunities.

Exhibitors, on their part, mark this annual event because they believe in the potential of Worldbex in helping create a demand for their products and generate sales. This early, numerous exhibitors have already expressed interest to take part in this year's construction trade fair.

G.A. TOWER II

High-end lifestyle made affordable

By Joel V. Nigos

HAVING a shot at and experiencing the high-end lifestyle especially at the heart of the metropolis is always a dream for every workingman. Not only that it offers the convenience of traveling to and from work, it also provides ease in going to major shopping malls, business offices, schools or hospitals as these are just a few minutes away. Amenities for residents living in these condominium buildings are also a plus. Residents can also enjoy the comfort of home as security is always provided.

> G.A. Tower II is a five-star condominium strategically located along Edsa. It has 600 residential units and 48 penthouse suites, all fully finished

But not every workingman can avail himself of these pleasures because getting a unit in these high-rise homes is not that easy financially. High-end living has a price. And often the financing plans of real estate developers are of little help.

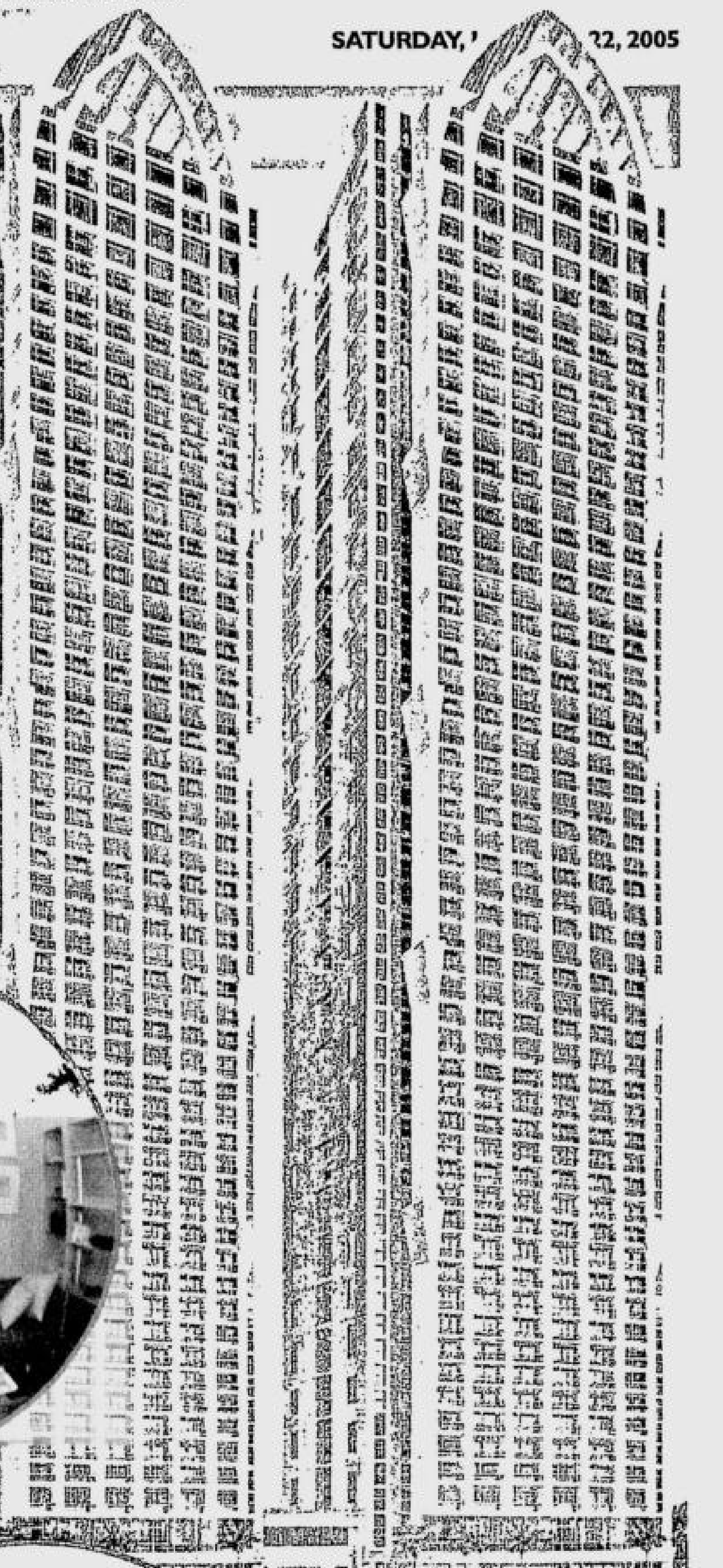
When Globe Asíatique (GA) Realty Holdings Corp launched G.A. Tower I two years ago, the developer specifically had this in mind. They knew there was a real market for condo buyers—the middle-income earners who now appreciate living in condo units, if they could afford one.

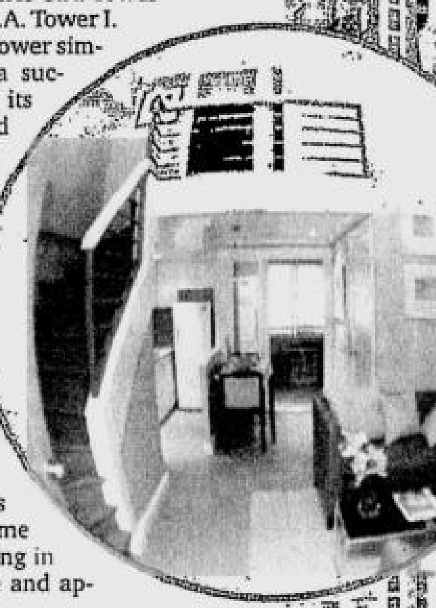
Delfin Lee, president of Globe Asiatique, says their formula of providing high-end living at very affordable cost proved to be very successful—exactly what the true market was waiting for. The timing was so perfect that . when Globe Asiatique launched the G.A. Tower I, the units sold like the proverbial "hotcakes." Inspired by the success of the first tower, Globe Asiatique moved on to develop another high-rise project, sensing the market for this kind of housing had kept on growing.

DELFIN Lee, president of Globe Asiatique

Today, Globe Asiatique launches G.A. Tower II, the identical twin tower of G.A. Tower I.

"We're building this second tower simply because we're following a successful formula," says Lee of its soon-to-rise second tower. "And just like the first tower, would-be homeowners are sure of getting high-quality units, fully finished," he says.



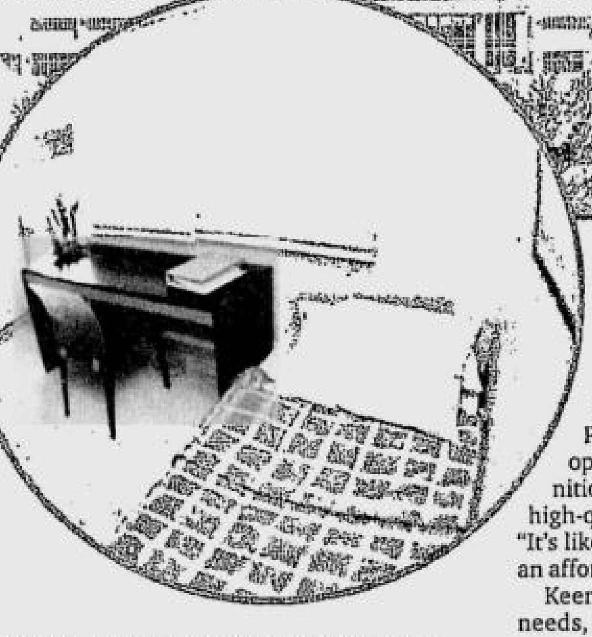


Lee says that even in Globe Asiatique's socialized housing projects, they always made sure that they give the buyers quality units. "We do not believe in low quality. When you buy a unit at G.A. Tower II, the units will not be delivered bare. All of our units are fully finished. When it's time to move in, all you need to bring in are your clothes and furniture and appliances and that's it," he says.

Asked how he would describe the G.A. Twin Tower, Lee says, "It's the rich man's lifestyle made affordable!"

Perfect location and amenities

G.A. Tower II is a five-star condominium strategically located along Edsa, the country's main artery and just 50 steps away from the MRT Boni Station. Its ideal location makes it a prime choice for employees working in Makati, Pasig and Mandaluyong and even along the entire stretch of the MRT route. Major shopping malls, hospitals, schools, and churches are also just a few minutes away.



Amenities for the 30-story residential project surely are first-class. It boasts of a well-landscaped façade and spacious lobby. The ground floor and the mezzanine are reserved for fast-food chains and restaurants. Commercial establishments such as convenience stores, laundry and other basic services shall also be available. At the 2nd floor is the swimming pool where homeowners can take a dip and the gym or spa where they can get fit and pampered. Five basement levels are available as parking spaces. Both G.A. Towers are also fitted with standard security and safety features.

Just like the first tower, G.A. Tower II has 600 residential units and 48 penthouse suites, all fully finished. Each unit has two toilets and bath, a living and dining area, a kitchen plus a loft. The units are designed along practical lines, fully utilizing space without compromising form and functionality. And for residents who need some help in their monthly amortization, the units' design allows bed-spacing or even renting out to co-workers.

Unique financing scheme

G.A. Tower II follows the same financing plan of its twin tower. Its easy and unique financing scheme would definitely suit the pocket of middle-income employees. No down payment is required from the buyer in order to reserve the unit. All that he has to do is to pay the first installment of the 20-percent equity and he's considered "reserved." The rest of the 20 percent is payable over 42 months at no interest. And depending on the cost of the unit, his monthly installments could go for as low as P9,523.81.

"Say you buy a unit which costs P2 million. Your 20-percent equity would be P400,000. You divide this amount by 42 months at zero interest and you get P9,523.81," explains Lee.

Lee adds that payment for the remaining 80 percent of the unit cost shall only start once the unit is delivered to the buyer, or after the construction period of 42 months. The buyer may opt to pay this through bank financing or the Pag-Ibig Fund's housing loan program.

With its ideal location, convenient payment terms, first-class amenities and fully finished units, G.A. Tower II would surely be a promise fulfilled for soon-to-be homeowners. A perfect home for every middle-income earner who values money, comfort and time with the family.

'Kabalikat sa Pabahay' awardee

Globe Asiatique was established 10 years ago as a developer focusing primarily in socialized housing. In 2003, it received the "Kabalikat sa Pabahay Award" as the Leading Developer in Socialized Housing and in recognition for its efforts to provide low-cost but high-quality projects to low-income earners. "It's like designing a high-end environment in an affordable housing project," says Lee.

Keenly adept in reading the market's needs, Globe Asiatique sensed a demand in housing in Metro Manila, which is why it ventured into medium-rise and high-rise housing. G.A. Tower I, its first high-rise, was launched two years ago, the same year the company ventured into Chateau Valenzuela, a Mediterranean-inspired condo-ville composed of 18 buildings and located in one of the country's fast-growing districts. The G.A. Tower II, the identical twin of the first tower, is its second high-rise project. Globe Asiatique, according to Lee, plans to launch three projects a year, either medium or high-rise.

Visit the G.A. Tower Office and Showroom at 79 Edsa corner Boni Avenue, Mandaluyong City (beside Bonifacio Motors) or call 534-7777.

I COMMEND the efforts of Globe Asiatique Realty Development Corp. to help out hard-working employees acquire not merely decent and affordable shelter, but more so, of their commitment to give the mid-level market the opportunity to live in comfort, security and luxury in the heart of Manila.

Its latest venture, the G.A. Tower II located along Edsa in Mandaluyong City shall serve as standing proof of how simple lives could be renewed and invigorated through the alliance of government and the private sector. Indeed, Globe Asiatique has continually given our mid-income families the opportunity to enjoy the luxuries of high-class living at a price within their reach.

I foresee the G.A. Tower II, along its twin the G.A. Tower I, is changing the residential landscape of Mandaluyong City, setting a trend in housing development that is market driven and strongly conscious of the needs of middle-income earners.

Again, my sincere congratulations to Globe Asiatique Realty Development Corp. on its newest venture - the G.A. Tower II.

VICE PRESIDENT NOLI DE CASTRO
Chairman
Housing and Urban Development
Coordinating Council

GLOBE Asiatique Realty Holdings Corp. is honored to be of service to the Filipino family through housing. G.A. Tower II, together with its twin the G.A. Tower I, are our response to the growing need of your urban workers for quality homes in Manila at affordable prices. G.A. Twin Tower, when complete, shall become a hallmark in residential development in Metro Manila.

Because we recognize and acknowledge the need for government and the private sector to join hands in addressing the country's housing problem, we have made it our company's mission to focus our in projects that would benefit the most at the least cost. G.A. Towers I and II, for all its upscale design and prime location, would stand as Globe Asiatique's testimony on affordability with quality.

We stand committed to our mission. And with agencies like HUDCC and the Pag-IBIG Fund to support us, we know that our efforts will continue to grow, multiply and intensify.

DELFIN S. LEE
President, Globe Asiatique
Realty Holdings Corp.

G.A. Tower II grand opening tonight

A night of light and sound

TONIGHT, Globe Asiatique Realty Holdings Corp promises a spectacular show of lights, sound and music—formally opening the G.A. Tower II to buyers. The grand event shall be held at the G.A. Tower Marketing Office and Showroom in 79 Edsa (beside Bonifacio Motors), Mandaluyong City. Vice President and HUDCC Chairman Noli de Castro has been invited as guest of honor with Pag-IBIG President and CEO lawyer Romero Quimbo.

A special entertainment program hosted by two of the country's top broadcasters, Korina Sanchez and Ted Failon, together with Toni Gonzaga, shall introduce a lifestyle that would make Globe Asiatique's G.A. Tower II with its twin, the G.A. Tower I, hallmarks in residential development in Metro Manila-bringing condo living within the reach of the middle-working class.

"We are proud of G.A. Tower, mainly because of its ideal location and the very easy and unique financing scheme, not to mention the high-quality and fully finished units. Our buyers will surely get more than their money's worth. Finally, the luxury of condo living is now within the reach of the middle working class," says Delfin Lee, president of Globe Asiatique.

G. A. TOWER 2 INVENTORY

GLOBE Asiatique's marketing team

The 'greening' of public markets

By Amado P. de Jesus Jr., FUAP

COMMENTARY

THE GREEKS call it agora. The Romans call it piazza, and we call it *palengke*. No matter the name, it means marketplace or public market. In this country, the public market has developed into one of the most visible structures in towns and cities, next to the church and the *munisipyo* (municipal hall).

While many building types like commercial buildings, schools and condominiums have undergone dramatic changes in style, function and architectural innovations, many of our public markets have not kept up with the latest advancements, particularly in green architectural design. Our country is literally dotted with many public markets that are not energy-efficient, not environment-friendly and definitely not healthy buildings.

Sanitation

Perhaps the most important criterion in evaluating public markets is sanitation. After all, they are the main source of seafood, meat and fresh produce that feed many of our citizens.

Unhealthy and dirty conditions can almost be directly traced to how public markets are planned and designed. For example, by designing a large block of building footprint (the area of the building directly in contact with the ground) you naturally deprive the inner core of the building of natural light and air.

Natural ventilation, light

For starters, natural ventilation hardly exists in many market buildings. This is aggravated by the worsening global warming phenomenon that helps build up heat. All these lead to very poor indoor air quality resulting in extremely uncomfortable conditions for market vendors and buyers. Food spoilage due to the heat also puts our health at great peril.

What about natural light? Many of our public markets do not use daylight extensively. They instead use incandescent bulbs to light the hallways and stalls. As mentioned in previous articles, artificial lighting uses as much as 40-50 percent of the energy consumption of most commercial and institutional buildings. Daylighting can significantly reduce those costs. If artificial lights cannot be avoided at all, it is best to use energy-efficient compact fluorescent lamps. They provide the same wattage of lighting while using less energy.

Other unhealthy conditions

Dirty, cramped, makeshift waterless toilets (definitely not comfort rooms), constantly wet and muddy hallways, garbage piled and strewn everywhere all contribute to making our public markets health hazards.

Unfortunately, many of our countrymen have little choice but to patronize our public markets since they offer varied goods and the best bargains.

What can be done?

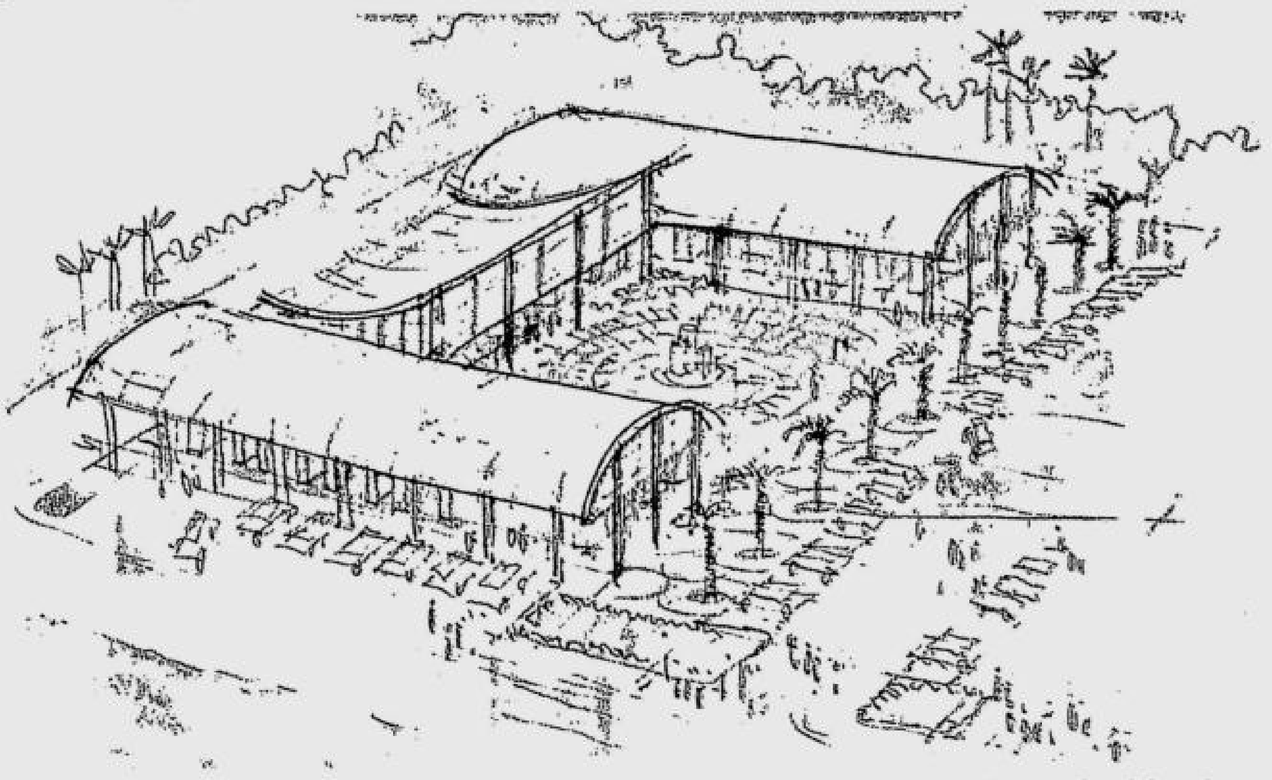
Applying green architecture principles in the planning of public markets does not necessarily entail high-tech solutions. But it involves a careful application of conventional technologies that have a powerful cumulative effect.

Let's take the building footprint, for example. To bring in more light and air into public markets, their building configuration will have to be slimmer. It will mean shorter roof spans that need smaller structural components and less materials, which in turn translate into savings. This simple design strategy can trigger off several green design benefits.

Green public markets

Green public markets are clean, airy, bright and cheerful. They help increase the productivity of workers. With a brightly lit place, buyers can easily find their way inside the market. They will be able to find their way to stalls without asking for directions at every corner.

One of the most effective ways to make public markets a great place to visit is by making them comfortable. Comfort, in this case, includes safety and cleanliness and the availability of places to sit, preferably near a landscaped courtyard with outdoor sculpture.



GREEN public markets are clean, airy, bright and cheerful. They help increase the productivity of workers. With a brightly lit place, buyers can easily find their way inside these markets because they are pedestrian-friendly and environment-friendly. These market are also comfortable places to visit.

Green public markets are pedestrian-friendly. Buyers will not be run over by brusque delivery boys with their oversized crates of goods. This is only possible if hallways are wide enough to accommodate several people going in different directions. They are also wheel-chair accessible with provisions for toilets that can accommodate special needs.

Basic social services are a must in green public markets. A medical clinic and childcare center would be welcome features.

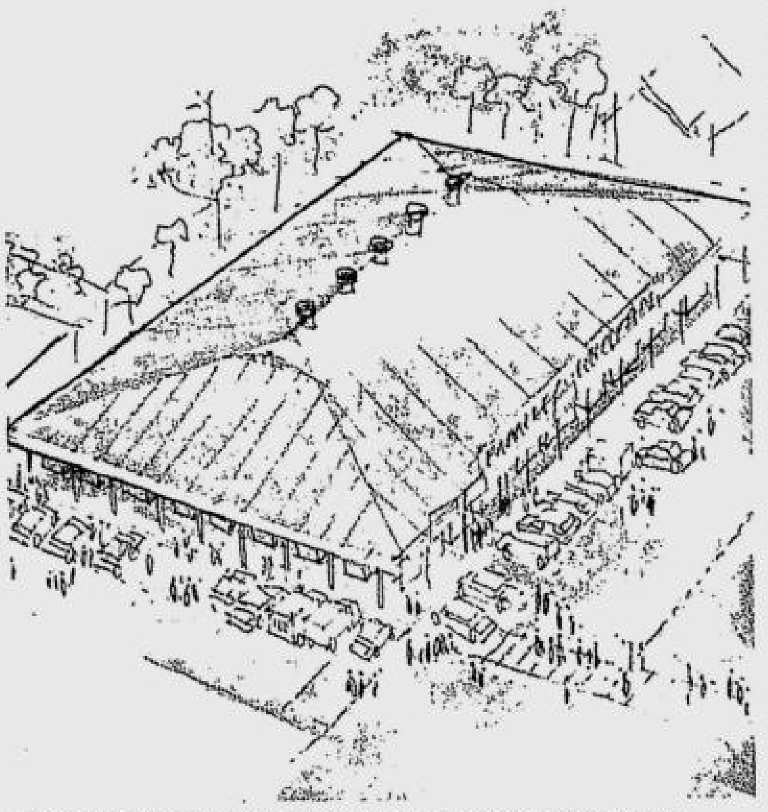
Green amenities

Water is an important resource in any public market. Rain or local utility water can be recycled or reused to flush toilets, irrigate the landscaped courtyards and clean the premises. Rainwater can be harvested and stored in underground cisterns for washing and drinking.

Other concerns such as security and maintenance help encourage more buyers to patronize public markets. By implementing effective measures to keep the place clean and safe will minimize vandalism and crime. This translates to less costly renovations and maintenance costs.

Generous sidewalks with seating areas and pedestrian-scale lighting are also important features to provide for the safety and convenience of pedestrians.

Concrete or asphalt parking areas absorb and radiate heat. Green parking areas use porous paving precast blocks to allow water to recharge the aquifer and minimize heat.



MANY traditional public markets are not energy-efficient, not environment-friendly and definitely not healthy buildings.

Great potential

In urban areas, green public markets help strengthen and revitalize the downtown areas by boosting local economies, attracting business and promoting tourism. They are excellent venues for showcasing agricultural and cultural products of the place. Green public markets prevent residents from fleeing the city's inner core because of new opportunities. They raise land values.

Green public markets are clean, safe and conducive to lively human interaction.

By going green, our country's public markets will rightfully step into the 21st century.

The author is vice-chair of the board of judges of the Asean Energy Awards and is a practising green architect. For comments or inquiries, e-mail amadodejesus@gmail.com

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Fiber cement pushed as wood substitute

IN THE WAKE of the extensive damage wrought by the recent succession of typhoons in Luzon, local environmentalists have called for a shift from wood and wood products, saying that the demand for wood is the main driver in logging activities that have depleted much of the country's forests.

In the Philippines and elsewhere, wood is sought after for its warm, homey look and its flexibility. In recent years, however, demand for wood has outstripped supply, causing prices to soar and making it an even more coveted building material.

As recent events have shown, the unabated demand for wood, coupled with wanton large-scale tree cutting, exacts its price. Fortunately, the movement for caring for the environment has resulted in the development of products that approximate—if not surpass—the qualities of wood.

Breakthrough material

HardiFlex fiber cement board, a breakthrough building material developed by James Hardie in 1980, is now becoming the standard in building construction. These durable cement boards are made of a combination of cement, sand and cellulose fibers. The cellulose fibers are imported from sustainably managed, commercial plantations that operate on a renewal-resource basis, with fresh replantings after harvesting.

James Hardie fiber cement boards come in the form of boards and planks. They are resistant to fire, water and termites, easy to install, and low-maintenance.

Different uses

James Hardie durable cement boards are available in a variety of lengths and thickness for different building applications. HardiFlex durable cement boards, the flagship brand, are best for internal walls, ceilings and eaves. HardiFlexSenepa durable cement fascia boards offer homeowners a durable alternative to common wood senepa.

Utilizing durable alternative building materials, such as HardiFlex fiber cement boards, will assure one of a durable, long-lasting home. More than that, doing so will help ease the strain on the country's resources and help prevent a repeat of the landslides and flash floods that killed thousands of people and destroyed millions of pesos worth of crops and property.

HSBC EDPPI BUILDING NEARS COMPLETION
Topping ceremonies were held in Northgate Cyberzone for HSBC Electronic Data Processing (Philippines) Inc. five-story building with a gross floor area of 22,000 square meters. The building, UK-based HSBC Group's 8th service center in Asia, is expected to be completed by Mid -2005. It will house a 2,000-seat call center and business process outsourcing for its global operations. HSBC EDPPI was constructed in a build-to-suit arrangement between HSBC EDPPI and Cyberzone Properties Inc., developer and facilities provider of Northgate Cyberzone IT Park located in Filinvest Corporate City in Alabang. From left are HSBC head of Global Group Resourcing Rob Muth, Filinvest Alabang Inc. first vice president Ieyo de Guzman, HSBC Global Resourcing East Asia COO Susie Babani, HSBC EDPPI president David Sutton, Filinvest Alabang EVP Josephine Gotianun Yap, HSBC Global Resourcing South Asia COO Malcolm Wagget and R. Villarosa Architects Partner and Associates managing partner Roger Villarosa.

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OPMC started out as an in-house marketing network of SLRDI. In 1995,OPMC was tasked to sell shares of Alta Vista Golf & Country Club,a high-end residential and golf project in Cebu. With the success of its initial venture,OPMC was then entrusted with several projects all over the country, and has installed branches in Bulacan, Calamba, Lucena, Iloilo,Cebu, Davao and Bacolod.

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Making lighting right

By Dianne M. Villafuerte

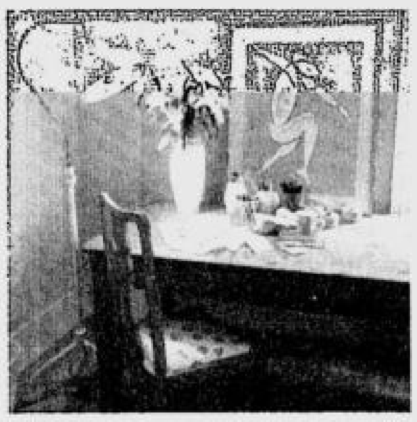
FENG shui experts all agree that lighting contributes much to a room's atmosphere and important for bringing positive and beneficial chi to a room.

Good and adequate lighting is believed to help stimulate the general flow of energy and one of the best ways for promoting balance and harmony within the home.

Feng shui practitioner Zaihong Shen, in her book Feng Shui, Harmonizing Your Inner and Outer Space, points out that even the amount of light in a room should be kept at a balance. For instance, a room that has too much bright light may prove uncomfortable for those in the room.

Lighting suggestions

Some of Shen's suggested lighting at home are:

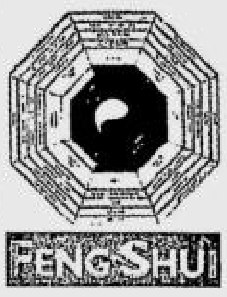

STUDY and work areas should be provided with proper and enough lighting.

- **Bedroom.** It is most advisable to use a table or standing lamp, overhead fixture or a sconce so long as it provides indirect lighting. Direct lighting, such as a bare light bulb, is discouraged.
- **Study/den/library.** Bright, high-wattage light bulbs are best for these rooms. Low-wattage bulbs with weak light are not recommended.
- **Dining room.** Moderate lighting over the table, chandelier or candles are preferable. Table lamps, low-wattage light bulbs with weak light, bare, high-wattage light bulbs that are exceedingly bright are, however, not recommended.
- **Kitchen and bathroom.** Light bulbs or lamp shades in warm overhead lighting, in yellow or salmon for example, are preferred. Table lamps and light bulbs or lamp shades in a lavender, gray or blue tint are not advised.

Shading bare light bulbs

We may notice that bare light bulbs are strongly discouraged in feng shui. This can be remedied by using shades over the light bulbs. Make sure, however, that the shade is large enough to keep the bare light bulb away from view.

It is not really a necessity in the home especially because it does not come cheap, but some feng shui practitioners believe that a chandelier is an effective lighting fixture in feng shui theory because the crystals in the chandelier reflect light beautifully which brings about added glow and warmth to a room. Candles, however, can be a good substitute for chandeliers. (But be responsible enough and make sure your lit candles are far from curtains and other combustible materials!)



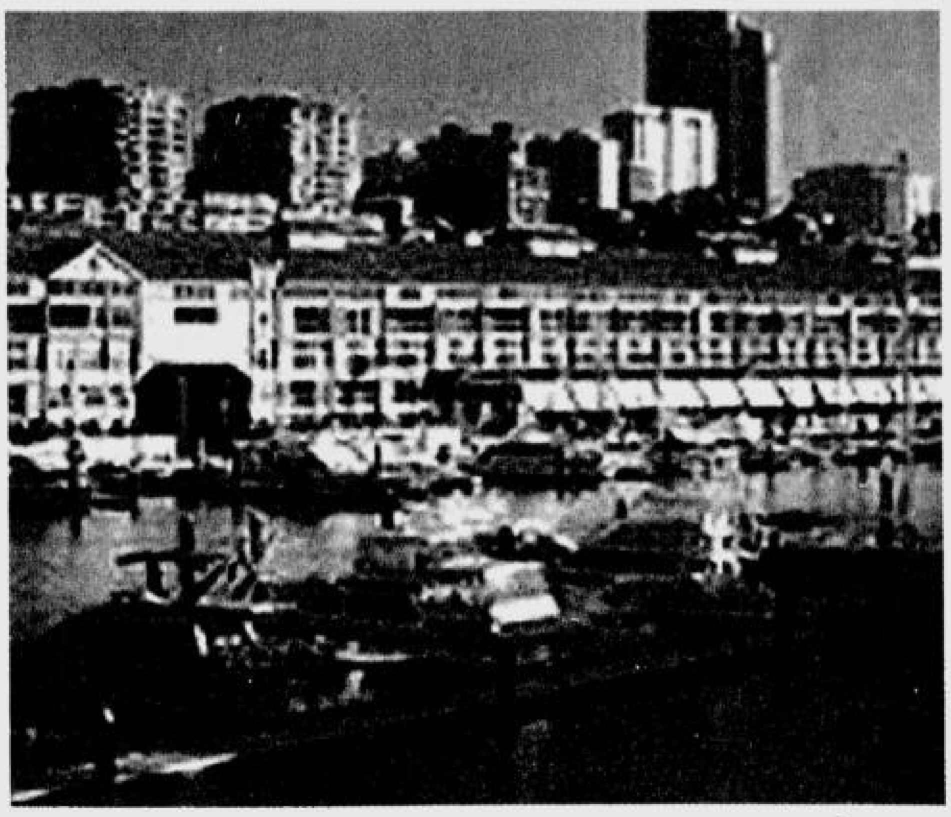
Feng shui theory also advises placing lights in the south, southwest and northeast sections. A chandelier that is hung in the southern corner of a room is beneficial while one that is hung in the southwest corner of your home is wonderful especially for romantic relationships. This is because the southwest portion relates to marriage. Installing a lamp shade in a pastel color with subdued lighting in this area can also achieve the same effect.

Bright lights installed inside and outside the front door are also believed to invite positive energy to your home.

Right lighting

The right lighting can make small or uninviting areas feel alive, welcoming and tranquil. A small, dark hallway may acquire a more uplifting feeling by simply installing a couple or more of bright lights. Lighting is also a simple yet sure-fire way of enhancing a room's scheme.

We may not realize it but investing in good quality lighting may just be the solution in improving and upgrading your home's overall look and atmosphere rather than investing much money on a major redecorating job or buying expensive new furnishings.


THE WOOLLOOMOOLOO Bay Wharf in Sydney, Australia, is the world's largest wooden building.

Knock on wood

AMAZING STRUCTURES

THE LARGEST wooden structure in the world can be found in Sydney, Australia. The Woolloomooloo Bay Wharf, which was built in 1912, measures 1,312 feet (400 meters) long and 206 feet (63 meters) wide and stands on 3,600 piles.

Woolloomooloo Bay, one of Sydney's oldest areas, is surrounded by the Sydney Opera House, the Woolloomoolloo Wharf development and other prime Sydney landmarks. People can even go boating at the beautiful harbor nearby.

Woolloomooloo Bay Wharf sits on the eastern side of the Sydney central business district and houses the W Hotel, an apartment complex where "Gladiator" star Russel Crowe resides, and a marina.

Dianne M. Villafuerte

Brittany's 360° Living presents ingenious innovations

360° LIVING, the new corporate division of real estate maverick Brittany Corp., continues the steady stream of trendsetting master-planned and themed residential communities with fresh innovations in design complementing the cultivated tastes and hard-earned success of young urban achievers. It challenges the stifled concepts of architecture and design with fresh ideas.

2 developments

The latest innovations in house design are reflected in the two developments of 360° Living—Trails of La Marea in San Pedro, Laguna; and Viera in Sucat.

- Trails of La Marea, a welcoming village boasting of limited home-and-lot packages. The rustic and quaint community is "city-close," removed yet not remote with its location in the newly opened San Pedro Interchange of the South Luzon Expressway.
- Viera, Brittany's debut in vertical properties is an ensemble of multilevel, mid-rise condominiums that will appeal to the sense of privacy, style and community of young urban achievers who have begun to earn the privileges of success. The lower levels of Viera will house choice establishments for shopping, dining and entertaining, providing convenience to future residents. Strategically bound by the Sucat and Bicutan Interchanges, Viera is a mere 15-minute drive from Makati via South Luzon Expressway and 20 minutes from Ortigas Center via C5.

5-point design philosophy

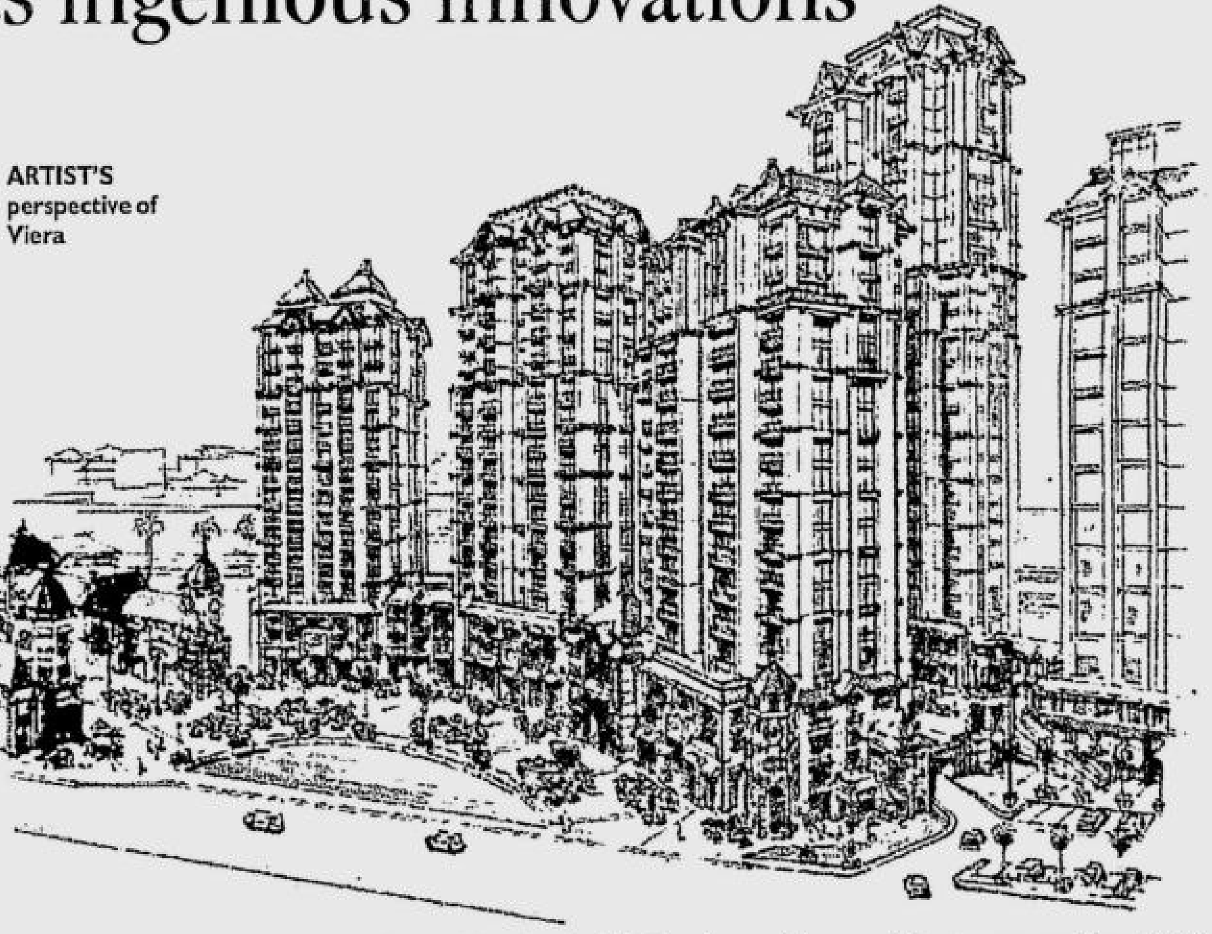
The five-point design philosophy of 360° Living molds the inimitable innovations inculcated at Trails of La Marea and Viera:

1. **Intelligent use of space.** 360° Living are characterized by intelligent space planning, demonstrating the relevance and value of the concept that "more can be done with less." Due to the ingenious use of space, each home gives the feeling that it is much bigger than its actual floor area.
2. **Shelter around activity.** Each area of the residences is designed with family activities in mind. Various parts of the house, like the family room or den, are planned to promote harmonious interaction among family members.
3. **Multifunctionality.** The various rooms of each unit are designed for more than just one function. The family room, for example, can double as a guest area or as a personal space for reading, listening to music or watching TV.
4. **Space of one's own.** Homes in 360° Living are designed to have individual spaces for every member of the family; a creative and quiet corner for mom, a mini-gym for dad, or a fantasy nook for little boys and girls.
5. **Interior views.** Interiors of the houses in 360° Living are enhanced by thoughtfully located windows that look out onto a pleasant landscape and charming neighborhood, and allow natural light to emphasize the sense of space within.

Success, security, lovely family and exceptional comfort affirm the stature of young urban achievers, while the communities of 360° Living cater to their unique needs and reflect cultivated tastes—bringing all the best that life can offer.

Previews of 360° Living properties can be arranged by calling 842-0436, 850-2868 and 842-1251.

LA MAREA'S Ungiolley


ARTIST'S perspective of Viera

There are lots of space to breathe at Serendra

WE all need space to breathe. After a stressful day at the office, we could hardly wait to get home and release a huge sigh of relief. But we can't do that if even at home, we feel crowded.

Most condominiums have this boxed-in feeling, precisely because of limited space. But not at Serendra, the latest and most innovative low-density residential condominium development of Ayala Land Inc. (ALI) and Community Innovations Inc. located at the Bonifacio Global City. At Serendra, you'll find that space is given the importance it deserves.

The first thing you notice about a Serendra unit is its height. "It has a good height," says Cynthia Almario who, together with her sister Ivy of Atelier Almario, designed one of the new three-bedroom model units at Serendra.

Says Cynthia: "It's about 12 inches more at the top than other regular condo units. So you don't feel claustrophobic. We wanted to emphasize this. We want the buyer to be aware of the height."

Model unit

When they were asked to do the model unit at Serendra, they were asked not to do any interior architectural changes, so the buyer sees the unit exactly the way they would get it. "This is the honest-to-goodness bare unit," she remarked.

Said Cynthia: "The reality is when you buy a condo unit, pretty much of the money you have left is for furniture. This way, you can see that this is what you can do with the unit without having to spend more money on additional architectural work."

2 colors

As you enter the three-bedroom unit, you'll find a floor-to-ceiling display cabinet cum bar with glass doors that snugly fits in the recess in the foyer. "We picked up from the brown color of the baseboard and the white walls and we were conscious of using these same two colors all throughout," Cynthia explained.

The two colors conformed to their style often described as "modern-minded classic." "We made the classic lines contemporary by using the two colors—brown and white," Cynthia noted. "It's very bold, very sharp."

The faded old maps in sepia, encased in brown wooden frames, were used as wall hangings.

Visual delight

"It's a visual delight," Cynthia observed. The accent chair in the living room was custom made.

"The bones are basic," Cynthia explained, "the bones of a wing chair, but we did away with the upholstery and introduced some graphic figures." The sofa has straight lines as well as the side stacking tables. The ceramic stool with brown and white design was sourced from Vietnam but locally bought. The wood blinds were imported but the brown vertical veins were added and made part of the design.

"Since the objective was to use actual bare unit space, we had to use creative ways just to balance some conditions," Cynthia pointed out. They used a pair of screens to give symmetry to the space where there was a post on one side and none on the other. Since they cannot bring down the ceiling, they used a pendant lighting fixture hanging down from the ceiling. They placed a table lamp on the dining table for added illumination. And even while they used the old mirror trick, they gave it a unique look by framing it, like a picture. "They say that you double your luck when you place a mirror in your dining room," Cynthia added. A bar ledge opens to the kitchen where food can pass through. "You can also have breakfast here," Cynthia suggested. "We added the shutters so when you are entertaining guests, they don't have to see the maid still cooking in the kitchen."

Bedroom space

The space for the bedrooms is away from the more public space of the living-dining area. The kids—a girl and a boy—are each given their own bedroom. It's precious, personal space that any young person would appreciate. "The girl is about 12 years old, a little late," Cynthia describes the brief given to them.

"So we created a theme for her. She's a Francophile and she dreams of going to Paris, and she loves photography," Cynthia added. So the wall is lined with small framed snapshots of Paris scenes. A miniature Eiffel Tower was custom-made to adorn a side table. The desk can also serve as a dresser with a vanity mirror. The doors of the closet were dressed up with crisscrossing ribbons. It also serves as a tack board for photos of her crushes, or postcards, or certificates and awards. While the room follows the brown and white theme, it still suits its feminine resident.

The boy's room has a sporty look. "He's about 9 or 10 years old, studying in a renowned school and he's into sports," Cynthia explained. A whole panel of the wall is covered with a corkboard that serves as his memory board, for his favorite *anime* posters, "Danger" and "No Entry" signs.

His closets have numbers like the ones you find on lockers in schools. A desk replaced a bed on the first layer of his "double-deck bed" where he could concentrate on his studies. And there's enough space leftover for bean bags or even a sleeping bag and huge throw pillows in case cousins or friends stay overnight.

For the design of the master bedroom, the first thing one would notice is the wall treatment. It looks like wall paper but it's not. It's all hand-painted. "We copied a Florentine wallpaper pattern from a magazine," Cynthia explained, "and we made it look antique, as if it was bought from a flea market. We used the color sage so the husband does not feel that it is a girl's room."

The lady of the house has her own dressing area with ample cabinet space for her wardrobe. It affords the luxury of having a room of one's own. An armoire contains the entertainment equipment, TV and sound system, which wife and hubby can enjoy together. A circular lighting fixture hangs over the queen-sized bed. "People are afraid that large furniture will make the space look smaller," Cynthia observed, "but in fact, it's the opposite. Too many small pieces of furniture just tend to clutter the space."

THE BOY'S room has a sporty look, with a whole panel of the wall covered with a cork that serves as memory board for favorite signs and posters. A desk replaced a bed on the first layer of the "double-deck bed" to serve as a private study.

Making lighting right

By Dianne M. Villafuerte

FENG shui experts all agree that lighting contributes much to a room's atmosphere and important for bringing positive and beneficial chi to a room.

Good and adequate lighting is believed to help stimulate the general flow of energy and one of the best ways for promoting balance and harmony within the home.

Feng shui practitioner Zaihong Shen, in her book Feng Shui, Harmonizing Your Inner and Outer Space, points out that even the amount of light in a room should be kept at a balance. For instance, a room that has too much bright light may prove uncomfortable for those in the room.

Lighting suggestions

Some of Shen's suggested lighting at home are:

STUDY and work areas should be provided with proper and enough lighting.

- **Bedroom.** It is most advisable to use a table or standing lamp, overhead fixture or a sconce so long as it provides indirect lighting. Direct lighting, such as a bare light bulb, is discouraged.
- **Study/den/library.** Bright, high-wattage light bulbs are best for these rooms. Low-wattage bulbs with weak light are not recommended.
- **Dining room.** Moderate lighting over the table, chandelier or candles are preferable. Table lamps, low-wattage light bulbs with weak light, bare, high-wattage light bulbs that are exceedingly bright are, however, not recommended.
- **Kitchen and bathroom.** Light bulbs or lamp shades in warm overhead lighting, in yellow or salmon for example, are preferred. Table lamps and light bulbs or lamp shades in a lavender, gray or blue tint are not advised.

Shading bare light bulbs

We may notice that bare light bulbs are strongly discouraged in feng shui. This can be remedied by using shades over the light bulbs. Make sure, however, that the shade is large enough to keep the bare light bulb away from view.

It is not really a necessity in the home especially because it does not come cheap, but some feng shui practitioners believe that a chandelier is an effective lighting fixture in feng shui theory because the crystals in the chandelier reflect light beautifully which brings about added glow and warmth to a room. Candles, however, can be a good substitute for chandeliers. (But be responsible enough and make sure your lit candles are far from curtains and other combustible materials!)

FENG SHUI

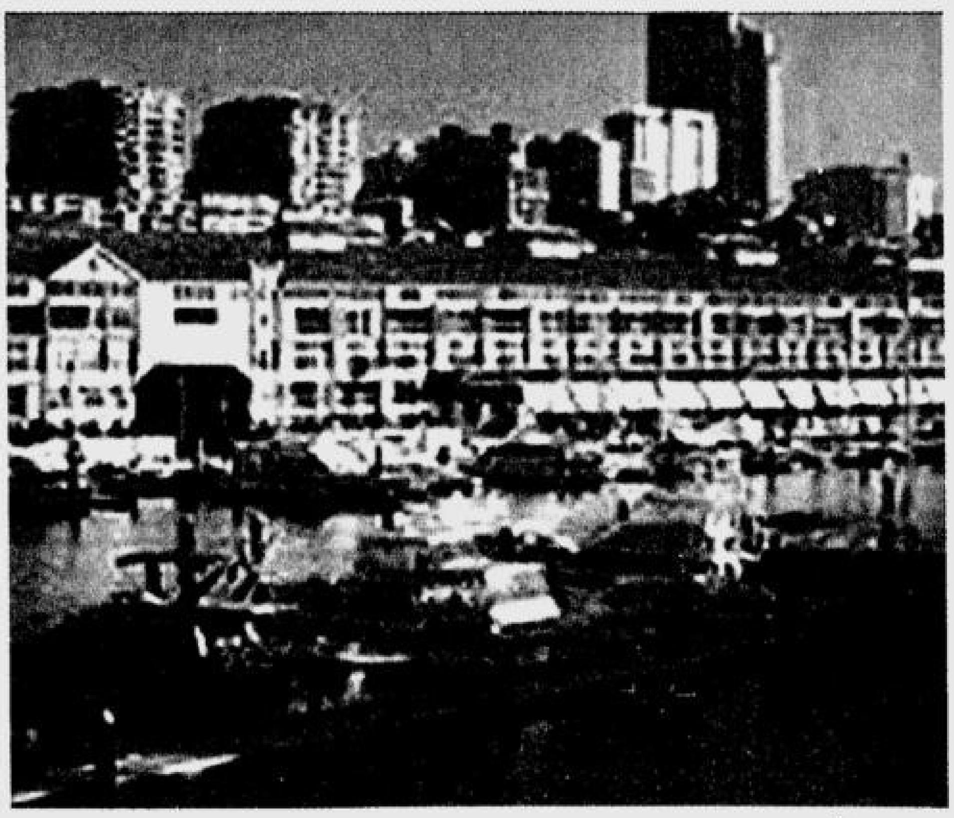
Feng shui theory also advises placing lights in the south, southwest and northeast sections. A chandelier that is hung in the southern corner of a room is beneficial while one that is hung in the southwest corner of your home is wonderful especially for romantic relationships. This is because the southwest portion relates to marriage. Installing a lamp shade in a pastel color with subdued lighting in this area can also achieve the same effect.

Bright lights installed inside and outside the front door are also believed to invite positive energy to your home.

Right lighting

The right lighting can make small or uninviting areas feel alive, welcoming and tranquil. A small, dark hallway may acquire a more uplifting feeling by simply installing a couple or more of bright lights. Lighting is also a simple yet sure-fire way of enhancing a room's scheme.

We may not realize it but investing in good quality lighting may just be the solution in improving and upgrading your home's overall look and atmosphere rather than investing much money on a major redecorating job or buying expensive new furnishings.



THE WOOLLOOMOOLOO Bay Wharf in Sydney, Australia, is the world's largest wooden building.

Knock on wood

AMAZING STRUCTURES

THE LARGEST wooden structure in the world can be found in Sydney, Australia. The Woolloomooloo Bay Wharf, which was built in 1912, measures 1,312 feet (400 meters) long and 206 feet (63 meters) wide and stands on 3,600 piles.

Woolloomooloo Bay, one of Sydney's oldest areas, is surrounded by the Sydney Opera House, the Woolloomoolloo Wharf development and other prime Sydney landmarks. People can even go boating at the beautiful harbor nearby.

Woolloomooloo Bay Wharf sits on the eastern side of the Sydney central business district and houses the W Hotel, an apartment complex where "Gladiator" star Russel Crowe resides, and a marina.

Dianne M. Villafuerte

Brittany's 360° Living presents ingenious innovations

360° LIVING, the new corporate division of real estate maverick Brittany Corp., continues the steady stream of trendsetting master-planned and themed residential communities with fresh innovations in design complementing the cultivated tastes and hard-earned success of young urban achievers. It challenges the stifled concepts of architecture and design with fresh ideas.

2 developments

The latest innovations in house design are reflected in the two developments of 360° Living—Trails of La Marea in San Pedro, Laguna; and Viera in Sucat.

- Trails of La Marea, a welcoming village boasting of limited home-and-lot packages. The rustic and quaint community is "city-close," removed yet not remote with its location in the newly opened San Pedro Interchange of the South Luzon Expressway.
- Viera, Brittany's debut in vertical properties is an ensemble of multilevel, mid-rise condominiums that will appeal to the sense of privacy, style and community of young urban achievers who have begun to earn the privileges of success. The lower levels of Viera will house choice establishments for shopping, dining and entertaining, providing convenience to future residents. Strategically bound by the Sucat and Bicutan Interchanges, Viera is a mere 15-minute drive from Makati via South Luzon Expressway and 20 minutes from Ortigas Center via C5.

5-point design philosophy

The five-point design philosophy of 360° Living molds the inimitable innovations inculcated at Trails of La Marea and Viera:

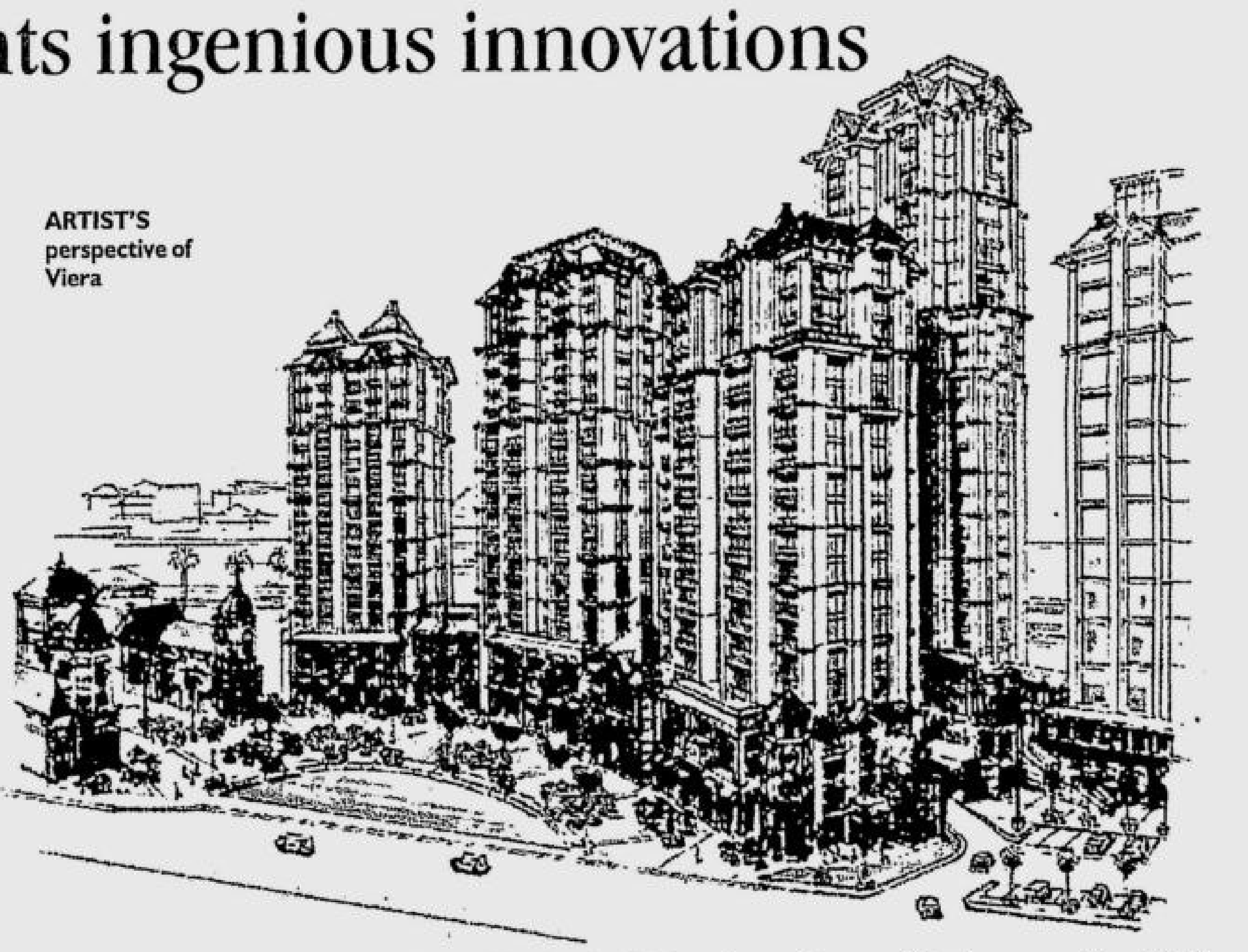
1. **Intelligent use of space.** 360° Living are characterized by intelligent space planning, demonstrating the relevance and value of the concept that "more can be done with less." Due to the ingenious use of space, each home gives the feeling that it is much bigger than its actual floor area.

2. **Shelter around activity.** Each area of the residences is designed with family activities in mind. Various parts of the house, like the family room or den, are planned to promote harmonious interaction among family members.

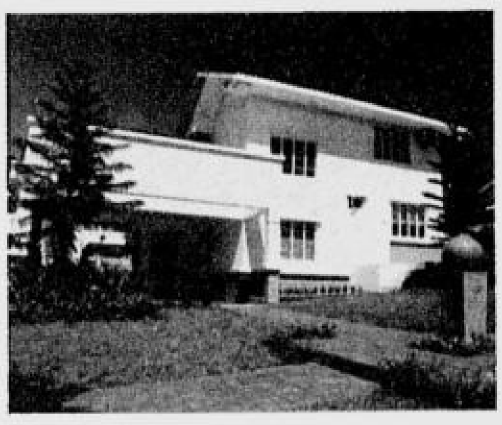
3. **Multifunctionality.** The various rooms of each unit are designed for more than just one function. The family room, for example, can double as a guest area or as a personal space for reading, listening to music or watching TV.

4. **Space of one's own.** Homes in 360° Living are designed to have individual spaces for every member of the family; a creative and quiet corner for mom, a mini-gym for dad, or a fantasy nook for little boys and girls.

5. **Interior views.** Interiors of the houses in 360° Living are enhanced by thoughtfully located windows that look out onto a pleasant landscape and charming neighborhood, and allow natural light to emphasize the sense of space within.



ARTIST'S perspective of Viera



LA MAREA'S Ungiolley

Success, security, lovely family and exceptional comfort affirm the stature of young urban achievers, while the communities of 360° Living cater to their unique needs and reflect cultivated tastes—bringing all the best that life can offer.

Previews of 360° Living properties can be arranged by calling 842-0436, 850-2868 and 842-1251.

There are lots of space to breathe at Serendra

WE all need space to breathe. After a stressful day at the office, we could hardly wait to get home and release a huge sigh of relief. But we can't do that if even at home, we feel crowded.

Most condominiums have this boxed-in feeling, precisely because of limited space. But not at Serendra, the latest and most innovative low-density residential condominium development of Ayala Land Inc. (ALI) and Community Innovations Inc. located at the Bonifacio Global City. At Serendra, you'll find that space is given the importance it deserves.

The first thing you notice about a Serendra unit is its height. "It has a good height," says Cynthia Almario who, together with her sister Ivy of Atelier Almario, designed one of the new three-bedroom model units at Serendra.

Says Cynthia: "It's about 12 inches more at the top than other regular condo units. So you don't feel claustrophobic. We wanted to emphasize this. We want the buyer to be aware of the height."

Model unit

When they were asked to do the model unit at Serendra, they were asked not to do any interior architectural changes, so the buyer sees the unit exactly the way they would get it. "This is the honest-to-goodness bare unit," she remarked.

Said Cynthia: "The reality is when you buy a condo unit, pretty much of the money you have left is for furniture. This way, you can see that this is what you can do with the unit without having to spend more money on additional architectural work."

2 colors

As you enter the three-bedroom unit, you'll find a floor-to-ceiling display cabinet cum bar with glass doors that snugly fits in the recess in the foyer. "We picked up from the brown color of the baseboard and the white walls and we were conscious of using these same two colors all throughout," Cynthia explained.

The two colors conformed to their style often described as "modern-minded classic." "We made the classic lines contemporary by using the two colors—brown and white," Cynthia noted. "It's very bold, very sharp."

The faded old maps in sepia, encased in brown wooden frames, were used as wall hangings.

Visual delight

"It's a visual delight," Cynthia observed. The accent chair in the living room was custom made.

"The bones are basic," Cynthia explained, "the bones of a wing chair, but we did away with the upholstery and introduced some graphic figures." The sofa has straight lines as well as the side stacking tables. The ceramic stool with brown and white design was sourced from Vietnam but locally bought. The wood blinds were imported but the brown vertical veins were added and made part of the design.

"Since the objective was to use actual bare unit space, we had to use creative ways just to balance some conditions," Cynthia pointed out. They used a pair of screens to give symmetry to the space where there was a post on one side and none on the other. Since they cannot bring down the ceiling, they used a pendant lighting fixture hanging down from the ceiling. They placed a table lamp on the dining table for added illumination. And even while they used the old mirror trick, they gave it a unique look by framing it, like a picture. "They say that you double your luck when you place a mirror in your dining room," Cynthia added. A bar ledge opens to the kitchen where food can pass through. "You can also have breakfast here," Cynthia suggested. "We added the shutters so when you are entertaining guests, they don't have to see the maid still cooking in the kitchen."

Bedroom space

The space for the bedrooms is away from the more public space of the living-dining area. The kids—a girl and a boy—are each given their own bedroom. It's precious, personal space that any young person would appreciate. "The girl is about 12 years old, a little late," Cynthia describes the brief given to them.

"So we created a theme for her. She's a Francophile and she dreams of going to Paris, and she loves photography," Cynthia added. So the wall is lined with small framed snapshots of Paris scenes. A miniature Eiffel Tower was custom-made to adorn a side table. The desk can also serve as a dresser with a vanity mirror. The doors of the closet were dressed up with crisscrossing ribbons. It also serves as a tack board for photos of her crushes, or postcards, or certificates and awards. While the room follows the brown and white theme, it still suits its feminine resident.

The boy's room has a sporty look. "He's about 9 or 10 years old, studying in a renowned school and he's into sports," Cynthia explained. A whole panel of the wall is covered with a corkboard that serves as his memory board, for his favorite *anime* posters, "Danger" and "No Entry" signs.

His closets have numbers like the ones you find on lockers in schools. A desk replaced a bed on the first layer of his "double-deck bed" where he could concentrate on his studies. And there's enough space leftover for bean bags or even a sleeping bag and huge throw pillows in case cousins or friends stay overnight.

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Stop losing sleep over frequent urination

By Dianne M. Villafuerte

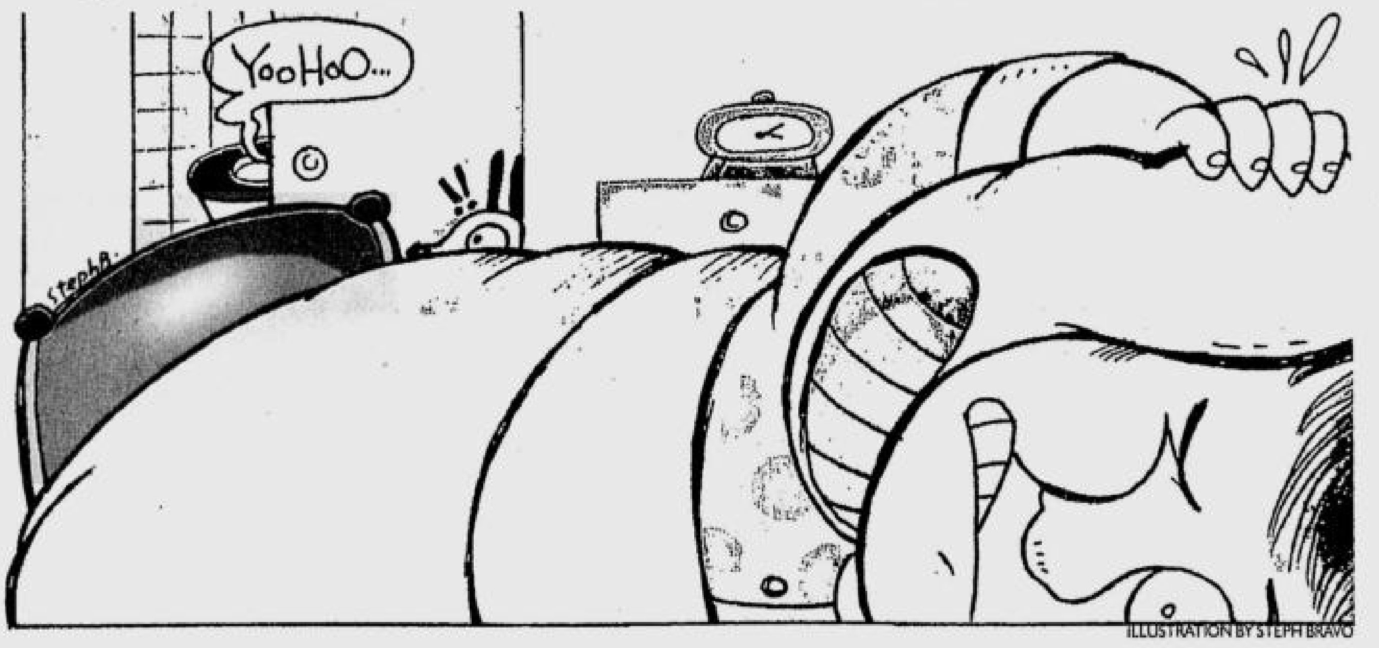


ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

IMAGINE having to get up more than twice every night, your much-needed and desired sleep interrupted by the need to take frequent trips to the bathroom. Imagine the difficulty of getting back to that most wanted sleep only to be woken again by the need to go. You may not realize it but you may be suffering from nocturia or frequent urination at nighttime.

Nocturia is a common condition that affects men and women of all ages. It is caused by nocturnal polyuria, which is increased urine production at night.

On Jan. 8, Ferring Pharmaceuticals Ltd. gathered 51 urologists from the Philippines, the Netherlands, Singapore, Hong Kong, United Kingdom, Thailand, Korea, Taiwan and Malaysia to a forum to address the effects of nocturia, and how it can be avoided and treated.

According to Dr. David T. Bolong, head of the Pediatric Urology Subsection and Bladder Dysfunction Unit of the University of Sto. Tomas Hospital and Philippine Children's Medical Center, about 35 percent of Filipinos suffer from nocturia based on a study conducted prior to the forum.

However, he points out, not all patients will complain of nocturia.

"They have nocturia, but they don't go to the doctor. But if you go deeper into the study, you will see that about seven percent complain about being disturbed in their sleep. That's the thing with nocturia, it keeps you from getting a good night's sleep," explains Bolong. "Can you imagine if your sleep is interrupted? When you wake up so often, your work efficiency suffers."

Both men and women

Based on surveys conducted it would seem that nocturia has a higher prevalence in women than in men, but Dr. Philip van Kerrebroeck, professor of urology at the University of Maastricht and chair of this year's Asian Nocturia Forum, believes that it is as prevalent in men as it is in women.

Says Linda Cardozo, professor of urogynecology and consultant gynecologist at King's College Hospital in London: "There's a higher prevalence in men who are very young and who are very old. In the middle years, the prevalence in women slightly exceeds the prevalence in men. Although we have no evidence of this, this is probably related to menopause."

According to Dr. Hashim Hashim of the United Kingdom, nocturia is one of the common causes of disturbed sleep patterns. It causes a lot of inconvenience because it affects the quality of life of an individual as sleep fragmentation will most likely bring about problems such as tiredness and sleepiness during daytime and mood changes.

Having nocturia is also dangerous especially to the elderly as it makes them prone to accidents whenever they have to get up at night.

Treatment

Van Kerrebroeck says there was not much interest in nocturia before because it was always seen as a symptom of another disorder or ailment.

It was primarily considered a problem of male patients with prostate disorders.

And many women were not aware that nocturia was a disorder.

"They think it comes with aging," says Van Kerrebroeck.

One possible treatment for nocturia is through the intake of desmopressin, the only evidence-based pharmacological treatment for the condition that is acknowledged by the International Consultation on Incontinence.

Desmopressin, an antidiuretic, is given to prevent or control frequent urination and loss of water.

Clinical trials have shown that it is effective in reducing the number of times a person has to go to the bathroom in the middle of the night.

Desmopressin is not recommended for pregnant women as their metabolism is significantly altered during pregnancy. Women who are breastfeeding are also discouraged from using it.

Diet

Proper diet can also help prevent the occurrence of nocturia.

One must keep in mind that the more one consumes food that have high water content, the more it would add to the amount of fluids he or she has to expel from the body.

There's also the amount of fluid intake at night. If a person drinks too much before going to bed, then he or she is most likely to get up in the middle of the night to answer Nature's call.

The urologists emphasize that if nocturia is a symptom of another disease, then that disease needs to be investigated and treated, and it may require a different therapeutic intervention.

Stress therapy for military, police enforcers

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

MEDICAL FILES

THE RECENT tragedy in Kalibo, wherein PO1 Jonathan Moreño gunned down his superiors and several others, was an eye-opener for our police authorities. It makes us shiver to think that a law enforcer, entrusted with a high-powered weapon, could suddenly snap and use it to diffuse his stress on unsuspecting victims.

This is no isolated case, and is not unique to the Philippines. They have similar massacres caused by psychologically unbalanced police enforcers abroad. I remember reading about a policeman on duty at Bombay's international airport who killed his commanding officer and took six people hostage. In another incident, a policeman killed his wife and child with his service revolver before taking his own life.

Because of the Kalibo incident, there is now a proposal that all policemen undergo psychological testing. This may be theoretically sound but would probably be impractical not only because of the cost and the time it will consume. This type of testing has its limitations and would only be a knee-jerk reaction that may yield no meaningful results.

Stress as trigger

I doubt if doing a routine psychological testing will screen out those with psychological problems among applicants for the military or police force. Answers to the test questions can be faked, and most psychological problems can only be unmasked when a person is exposed to the "trigger" or the root cause of these problems. This trigger is stress.

I'm not sure if psychologists have designed a "stress test" to determine people with potential psychological problems who may be perfectly normal under unstressed conditions.

There is no question that our police and military enforcers are under a lot of stress. Enlisted men are probably more stressed than the generals. Support measures must be provided to make sure that they're able to handle their stress properly and not to vent it on someone else.

It's possible that Moreño unleashed his fury on his bosses and colleagues because he might have felt that they were not helping him with his problem. Or extreme paranoia might have led him to the delusion that his superiors and colleagues were actually the ones threatening his life.

Stress therapy, and remaining emotionally and psychologically fit, should be as major and routine concern in the police and military as being physically fit.

Everyone should be trained on stress-busting techniques. Even simple ones like proper breathing, meditation, positive affirmation and praying, practiced regularly, can do a lot to prevent simple stresses from eating one's sanity and making him snap.

Signs

The following are telltale signs and symptoms of unhealthy stress:

- Persistent irritability and anxiety
- Insomnia
- Occasional forgetfulness and/or inability to concentrate
- Absenteeism or tardiness for work
- Tiredness and fatigue for no reason
- Procrastination and indecision
- Increased use of coffee, alcohol or tobacco
- Resentful, indifferent and defiant attitude
- Chronic stress-related illnesses (headache, stomachache, bowel problems)

Psychological counselors should be available to guide our law enforcers on how to detect early signs of stress, and handle them well. I have several policemen-patients who believe that being under stress is "part of the territory" and there's nothing that can be done to avoid it.

Avoiding it is probably not possible, but managing one's stress is definitely doable.

In most instances, these law enforcers just need someone to talk to so they could release their suppressed emotions. They should have access to a counselor.

Our law enforcers should also realize that smoking, drinking and intake of "recreational" drugs, which some erroneously think of as antistress vices, actually minimize one's coping capabilities to stress. It's not surprising that most abusive acts and violence are committed when one is under the influence of alcohol and drugs.

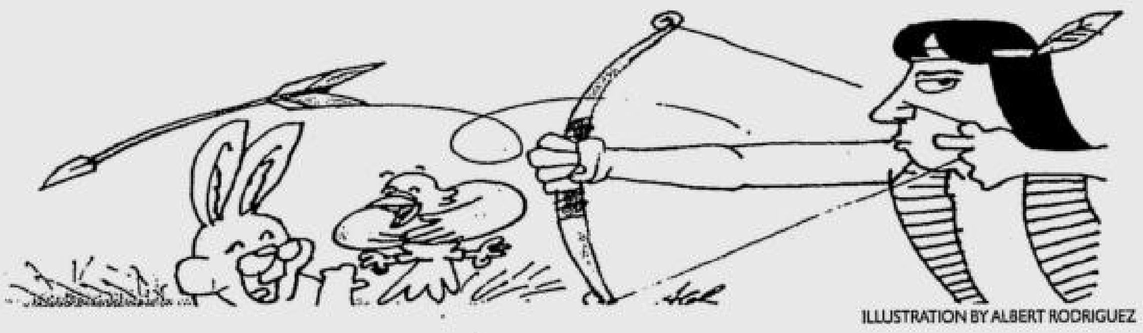


ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

The mechanics of arrow flight

(Conclusion)

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

FOR THE PAST weeks we looked at Brazilian music, Inca counting and Chinese tea. We conclude this series on math and science around the world by investigating the science behind simple flight. These activities were taken from the excellent book "Math and Science Across Cultures" (by Maurice Bazin, Modesto Tamez and the Exploratorium Teacher Institute). It is available at the National Book Development Board on A. Ma. Regidor Street, Area XI, UP campus, Diliman, Quezon City (tel. no. 929-3878).

Different hunting tools have evolved: the boomerang of the Australian aborigines, the blowguns of the native South Americans, the arrows of the Middle Age archers, the rifles of the Europeans, the firecrackers of the Chinese.

Let us focus on the spears, bows and arrows of the Native American cultures. Their bows were made of strong, straight-grained wood, sometimes with deer sinew. Simple light bows were used for small game and the stronger, sinew-layered bows for larger animals. Different arrows were made for various purposes as well.

What makes an arrow fly?

The length of the arrow, its weight, the straightness of the shaft and even the way the feathers are chosen and placed (fletching) affect its flight. Feathers make arrows beautiful, but their main purpose is to make the arrow fly straight and true.

Different tribes used different methods of fletching. The Miwok Indians of Northern California and the Chumash of Southern California used the same side of split feathers. An arrow maker would take three split feathers and attach them to the back of the arrow. The Cherokee did their fletching in a similar way but often fastened the three half-feathers in slanted positions, adding a slight twist. In the Amazon region, fletching had just two half-feathers.

Only a carefully designed arrow will fly straight through the air. Two forces act on it: gravity and air resistance, and to make sure these are in balance, the center of mass and the center of pressure should be kept in mind.

The center of mass, the point of balance for any object, is important for flight stability. If you put a pin through an object's center of mass, you can turn the object in any direction and it will stay in that position, in perfect balance..

Get some arrows (available at hobby shops). Hold an arrow by putting one finger under each end. Slide your fingers together toward the middle of the arrow. Notice that it remains balanced. When your fingers meet, you have found the arrow's center of mass. Is it at the midpoint or toward the front?

The exact centers of mass are different with different arrows, but you have probably found out that on average, the center of mass is nearer the front of the arrows. This is true also for rockets and other flying objects: the center of mass is forward of the midpoint of the object.

Finding center of pressure

The center of pressure is the point at which you can hold an object between two fingers and move it through the air without changing the direction in which it is pointing.

Get a yardstick, and use two fingers to hold it at its center of mass, then move it through the air. Walk forward, backward and sideways, keeping it free to wobble around its center of mass.

You will see that no matter what direction you move, the stick stays pointed in the same direction as when you started. For a yardstick, the center of pressure and the center of mass are in the same place. But the yardstick cannot fly.

Tape a large cardboard fin at one end of the yardstick, and hold it at its center of mass. Walk in all directions. Now you will notice that the fin has changed the location of the original center of pressure. This time, if the yardstick's long body was pointing in a different direction from the one in which you were walking, the air dragged on the fin.

Like a weather vane that lines up in the direction the wind is blowing, the stick will line up in the direction of travel. The fletching on an arrow acts like the fin. The feathers help keep the arrow straight.

Experiment to find the center of pressure of your arrows. You will find that the center of pressure is closer to the back of the object (nearer to the feathers) than it is to the midpoint. For any successful flying object (like an arrow or a rocket) to go in a straight line, the center of mass has to be in front of the center of pressure.

E-mail the author at blessbook@yahoo.com.

ASK THE DENTIST

Paul R. De Castro, DMD

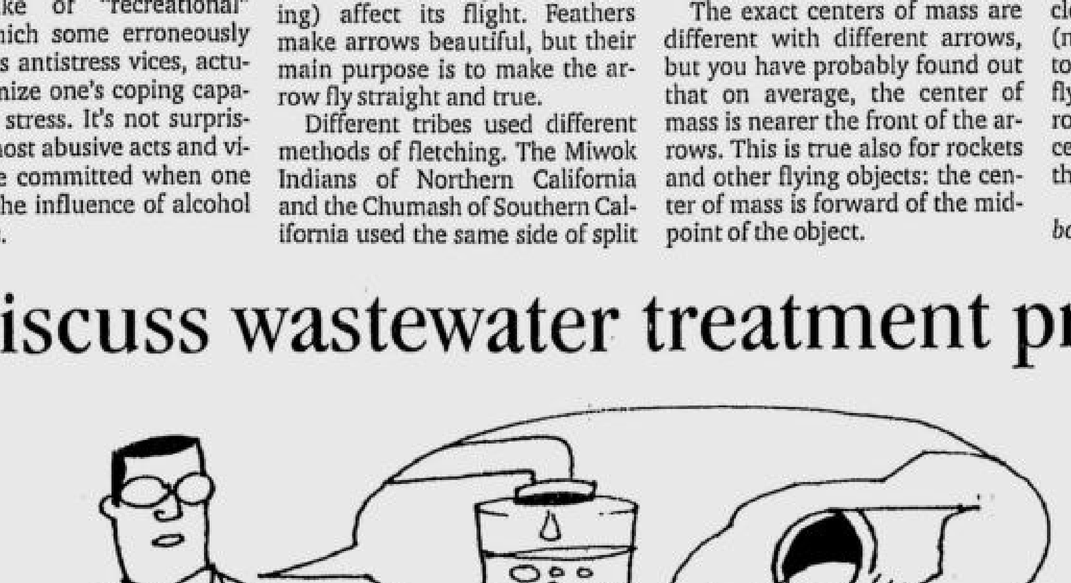
Moving molar

MY molar needs a root canal and I would like to save it. But on the day my dentist started the root canal, he told me that my molar was loose. Should I continue with the treatment or should I just have the tooth removed?—Gigi T.

Your tooth has a double problem. If the gum problem or mobility problem is caused by the nerve getting infected, then a root canal will solve both your problems. However if the gum problem is independent of the root canal problem, then your dentist will have to evaluate whether the problem is manageable or not. Overall it is best to save the tooth than to lose it.

E-mail your questions at dentalqs@yahoo.com.

WEAP to discuss wastewater treatment problems



THE WATER Environment Association of the Philippines (WEAP), committed to the preservation of water and the environment, will hold a technical seminar on "Basic Wastewater Treatment Principles and Practices" at the Holiday Inn Galleria, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, on Jan. 31 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. WEAP is a member association of the Water Environment Federation in the United States.

Objectives

WEAP president Carlito Santos said the seminar aims to address the various problems encountered by industries in complying with Department of Environment and Natural Resources requirements and in the troubleshooting of activated sludge system, especially sludge bulking and foaming problems.

Santos said the seminar will introduce the basic principles of biological wastewater treatment process, microbiology in wastewater treatment and the importance of wastewater characterization in process design.

Effects

In a recent report, the Philippine Environment Monitor said untreated wastewater affects health and recreation, threatens biodiversity and leads to the deterioration of the overall quality of water. Clean water being a vital but scarce and finite commodity, should be conserved, treated and reused, WEAP urged.

Ensuring an efficient, economically viable, environmentally sound and socially responsible wastewater treatment alternatives will enable people to sustain water resources and make clean and safe water available for both humans and wildlife, WEAP said.

Speakers will be experts from the DENR Environment Management Bureau laboratory and other professionals who are WEAP members. For details, call WEAP staffer Joy Macasaya at 410-1119 or 371-9790.

SCIENCE/HEALTH

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E-mail: pr_science_health@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang
Assistant Editor Stella O. Gonzales

Alleviate poverty by promoting health, says demographer

By Stella O. Gonzales

IMAGINE a person trapped in quicksand. The more he struggles, the deeper inside the quicksand he goes. He can't get out unless somebody gives him a tree branch from which to hang on to and pull himself out.

This quicksand metaphor is used by David Bloom, the Clarence James Gamble professor of Economics and Demography in Harvard's School of Public Health, to explain the concept of poverty trap and how health promotion can help solve the problem.

The "quicksand" is poverty; the "branch" is demographic change, in particular, a change in fertility rates.

Backed by evidence

Bloom says his theory is backed by evidence—the experience of many countries that either pushed for a good population program or neglected it.

"In countries where economic growth is stagnant, the fertility rate is very high," Bloom says.

Bloom talked briefly about his studies on economics and demography during a call on INQUIRER chair Marixi Prieto and president Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez at the INQUIRER's Makati City office this week. He was accompanied by Michael Voligny, Director of International Giving of the Harvard School of Public Health.

Bloom was in the country for a speaking engagement last Thursday before the Asia Foundation.

Push for everything

Bloom, however, stresses that he does not believe that fertility control alone would solve poverty.

"Cutting fertility rate alone will not solve the poverty problem," he points out. "There's no single thing you can do to solve the national problem, what's important is to make a push for everything."

"Everything" in this case involves a whole gamut of things, including fertility, education, better water systems, sanitation, stronger health systems, even anti-corruption programs.

What is important to note, he says, is that governments should realize that health plays a very important part in poverty alleviation.

"Health was never on the map," Bloom points out.

Bloom is disturbed by the fact that two billion people in the world today live on less than one dollar a day.

He says: "It's appalling that we have a kind of situation in this day and age where people can't even meet their basic needs."

Not one-way

Harvard professor David Bloom and Michael Voligny, director of International Giving of the Harvard School of Public Health visit the INQUIRER office.
VAL HANDUMON

Many previous studies have found a very strong association between low income and poor health—that an improvement in health leads to an improvement in income.

Bloom, on the other hand, sees a circular relationship between health and income—low income leads to bad health and bad health leads to low income.

"It is not one way but goes both ways," he says.

"When people aren't healthy, they can't get out of poverty," he says. And the reverse is also true.

A poor family won't have sufficient resources for vaccination, safe water supply, antibiotics, and the like, and thus would have poor health.

'Big wave'

To get out of the poverty trap, Bloom believes a government must ride on the "big wave," the branch in the quicksand metaphor: demographic change.

He cites the case of Ireland where contraception was legalized in 1979 and liberalized in 1985. When birth rates dropped as a result, a tremendous opportunity for the government to build the economy was created. As a result, Bloom says the economy almost doubled compared to when the fertility rate was high.

"The evidence is clear," Bloom says, "demographic change is a very potent way to get out of the poverty trap."

Opportunities for women

But what about in the case of the Philippines where the government itself is not too keen on pushing for fertility control?

Bloom says there is a way around this problem: put emphasis on the education of girls.

When a woman is educated, she is more aware of her rights and the opportunities she can have if she has control over her fertility. On her own, the woman will choose contraception to space the births of her children and plan her family because she is now aware of the benefits having a small family brings.

Bloom says women must also be provided opportunities for microfinance and microcredit to further empower them.

Says Bloom: "If the Philippines can't have a strong population policy, then it should build up opportunities for women."

Beer protects against cancer?

LONDON—Mystery ingredients in nonalcoholic beer may protect against cancer, at least in mice.

Rodents fed cancer-causing chemicals suffered 85 percent less DNA damage to the liver, lungs and kidneys if given nonalcoholic beer, compared to mice fed the chemicals but with only water to drink, researchers at Japan's Okayama University found.

Unknown ingredients

Although drinking too much alcohol could increase the risk of certain types of cancer, researcher Sakae Arimoto-Kobayashi thinks unknown ingredients in the nonalcoholic beer prevented the toxic chemicals from damaging the DNA.

"If these compounds can be identified, brewers might be able to produce beers particularly rich in them, or they could be added to foods," New Scientist magazine said.

Researchers could not say if moderate consumption of regular beer would have any benefit.

"The total benefits and risks of beer with alcohol are still under consideration," Arimoto-Kobayashi told the magazine. *Reuters*

Healthy Teeth & Gums for Life
Tips from the Dentist

START THE YEAR RIGHT WITH GREAT TEETH AND A PERFECT SMILE

The holidays are long over. And while most people are desperately trying to lose the added pounds from all the party binges, it's also high time to check on your teeth. In the past year, have you been good or bad to your teeth? Remember that all the sinful and delightful dishes you gorged on during the holidays wouldn't be as delightful or enjoyable, if your teeth start falling out due to improper care.

New Year is always a good time to start anew. So what better way to start 2005 but with a great set of teeth and a disarming smile. So for the next 365 days of great eating and drinking, here are some dental tips from Dr. Natalie Son to keep your teeth munching in tiptop shape for years to come.

For our teeth to be strong and to prevent cavities, what type of diet should we maintain?

Eat a balanced diet by consuming a variety of foods. To keep the teeth and gums healthy, eat food that is rich in Vitamin C, calcium, and milk to make bones and teeth stronger. You may also eat foods that are good sources of fluoride such as tea, soybeans, coconut, seafoods and sweet potatoes.

What is the proper and step-by-step process in brushing and caring for the teeth?

Begin by brushing at the top of the teeth then proceed to the inner surfaces of the teeth, then to the outer surfaces. The general rule is downward strokes for upper teeth and upward strokes for lower teeth. Always remember that gums need to be massaged during brushing. Same goes for the tongue as well. Finally, make it a habit to brush at least two minutes after eating.

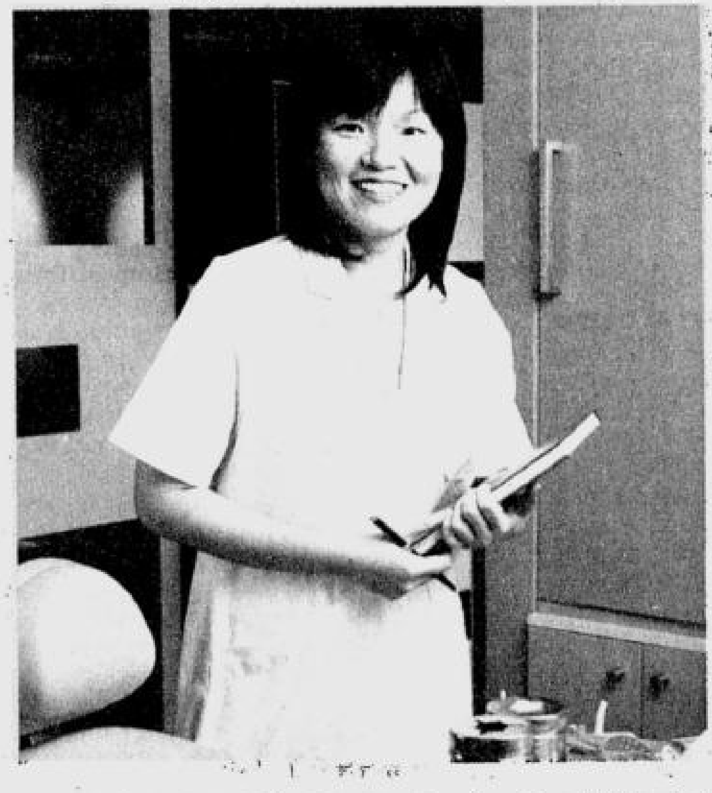
To start the year right, we must make it a habit to have regular check-ups. How often in a year should one visit his or her dentist?

One should visit his dentist at least twice a year. In addition to having your teeth cleaned professionally, the dentist can identify and foresee a dental problem – especially those who are prone to tooth decay. For people with poor oral hygiene, it is advisable to visit the dentist more often.

To have year-round great teeth and a perfect smile, dental health depends upon good habits, proper nutrition and professional monitoring. What are the other things you could advise in addition to regular brushing?

You could also use floss, mouthrinse, an oral irrigator and a power toothbrush. When you floss, take enough length of thread, make sure that you will be able to hold both ends. Insert the thread between the teeth and slide it down while resting on the tooth surface to avoid cuts or bleeding. Using mouthwash is also effective in the prevention and cure of gum diseases.

Achieving a perfect smile has no age limit, and it's never too late to change old habits and start on good oral care. For this year, having healthy teeth and gums, and the perfect smile should be on top of everyone's New Year's resolution.


Dr. Natalie T. Son obtained her College of Dentistry degree from the University of the East, Manila in 1989. She is a member of the Philippine Dental Association and Quezon City Dental Society. Dr. Son operates her own clinic at Future Point Plaza Suite 707, 112 Panay Ave, Quezon City, tel. number 416-7005.

Dental Equity Study shows 81% of Filipino dentists use Oral-B

In a Dental Equity Study among Filipino dentists conducted by AC Nielsen, a global leader in market research and information, Oral-B was the top brand of toothbrush that most dentists used and recommended. The study showed that 81% of dentists personally use Oral-B. Bristle quality was the primary consideration among dentists in choosing a particular brand next to cleaning efficiency, comfort and safety. Oral-B also leads among the brands of power toothbrush (both battery and electric) that dentists recommend to their patients.

Oral-B The Brand More Dentists Use Themselves

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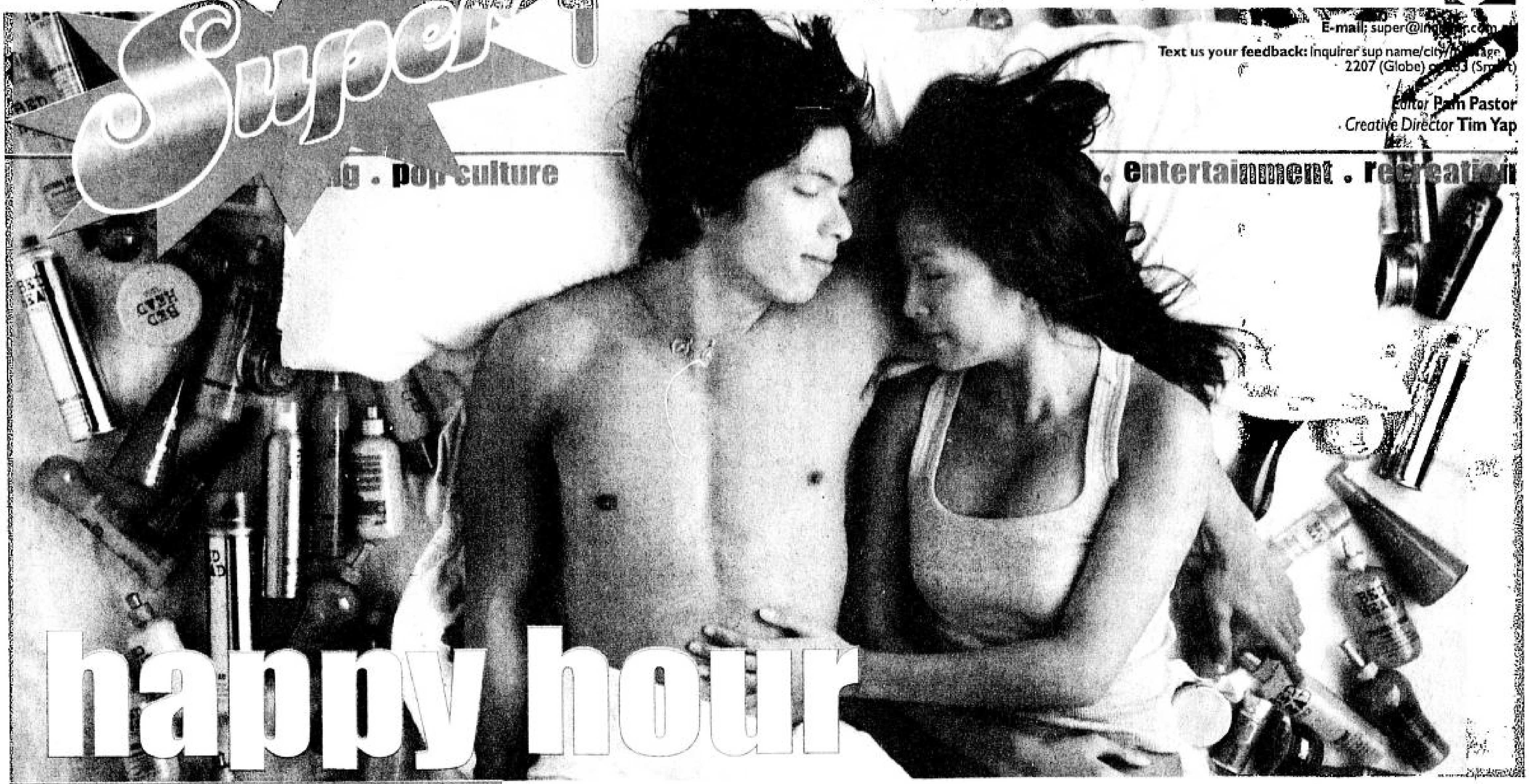

happy hour

Prince Harry enjoys his "Me Years"

page F1

Natassia Malthe plays Typhoid Mary in "Elektra"

page C2

10 tips for celebrity couples

page E2

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Oh caption, my caption!

By Gino de la Paz

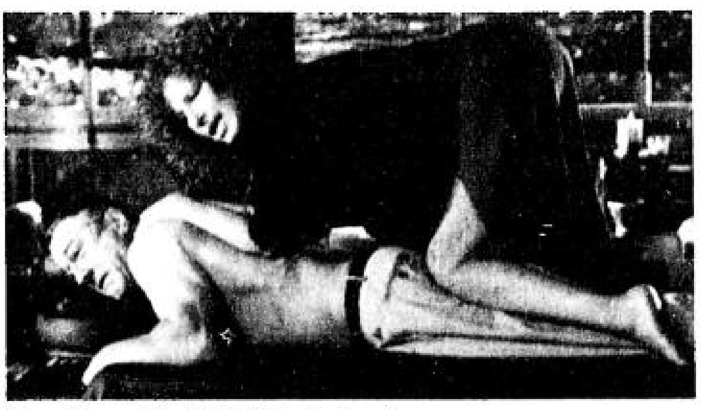
WE'RE baaaaaaack...

Yeah, we know it's been ages since we last challenged you caption-savvy kids. But it's never too late to usher in 2005, right? So staying true to our mission—lighthearted fun for the weekend, plus plus—we'd like to give rightful props to two outstanding captioneers. Selenne Anne R. Santiago and Den Castillo, we may have been a bit late in congratulating you but hey, you still won! Whoopteedee! First thing on Monday, don't forget to call our Marketing Department at 897-8808 to ask for your prizes.

Winning Caption #1: "And the winner is.... Monkey Pacquiao!!"
Sender: Selenne Anne R. Santiago
Winning Caption #2:Monkey Pacquiao
Sender: Den Castillo

This Week's Challenge

Now to get things moving along, lock your eyes on this. It's Barbra Streisand and Robert de Niro in a memorable scene from "Meet The Fockers," the most, er, artistic movie of their respective careers. In case you haven't seen the movie, we won't spoil it for you but we have this to say: Babs (seen here) plays a sex therapist for senior citizens. Enough info for you? Flex your wits and caption this photo ASAP! So get Fockerized and send those captions to super@inquirer.com.ph or send inquirer sup name/city/caption to 2207 for Globe or 283 for Smart. This is probably the only chance we have to say this, so see ya next week, Fockers!



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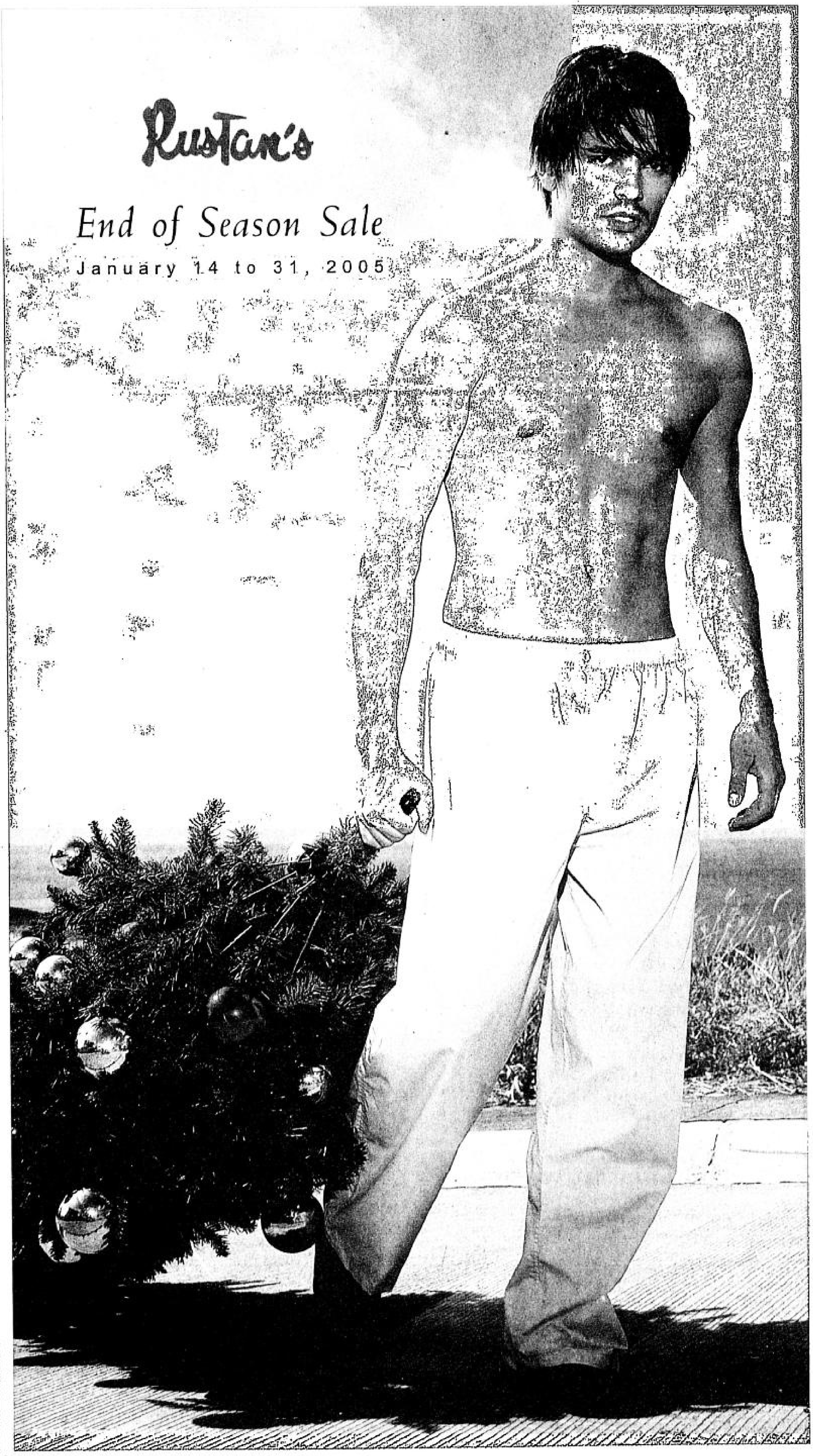

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MANILA MODEL TO HOLLYWOOD HOTTIE. Natassia Malthe is Typhoid Mary, nemesis of Elektra

AN ELEKTRIFYING scene with Jennifer Garner

SUPER! SCOOP! NATASSIA MALTHE IN 'ELEKTRA'

Typhoid Fever

By Chere Du

STILL in her most relaxed mood despite her hectic shoot schedule, Natassia sits comfortably on her new couch after moving into her new apartment. She just finished furnishing her new flat in LA, and flew in her parents and sister for the holidays.

I tease her about being all over Jennifer Garner in her current movie "Elektra," and for being all over the magazines in the US. She is featured this month in Glamour, Shape and Maxim, and is also on the cover of Stuff magazine. She giggles as we exchange gossip about Hollywood and, surprisingly, she wanted to find out the latest news about the Philippines.

She loves the Philippines!

Only a few knew that Natassia Malthe, who plays the sexy villain Typhoid Mary in the upcoming movie Elektra, spent some time in the Philippines during the last four years. After being discovered by CalCarrie's International way back in the late '90s, the former ballerina frequented the Philippines and Asia to shoot for local and regional endorsements like Giordano, Axe Deo-Cologne, Johnson's pH 5.5, and Avon.

"I love the Philippines!" she exclaims. "I am fascinated with the Filipinos. They are so artistic with how they furnish their houses, and they are so clever with how they make their homes so comfortable for entertaining guests."

Aside from shooting for print and TV commercials in the Philippines, she also graced some magazine covers and fashion editorials that brought her to the islands. "I really liked seeing the islands. I had this fashion shoot in Palawan with Cristina Garcia and we absolutely enjoyed working while going through the exotic resorts and beaches there."

After the holidays, Natassia is busy shooting more films on television and on the big screen. "I am starring on television in Oxygen Network's 'Confessions of a Sociopathic Social Climber,' opposite Jennifer Love Hewitt, and playing her best friend. I am also playing the role of Emily in a teen horror movie called "Sitter's Night.'"

After "Elektra," Natassia is set to shoot more action-packed films and becomes excited when she talks about another adrenaline-pumping movie role. "Yes! I will be in this movie called "Dead or Alive." It is based on the PlayStation game, and this movie is produced by the same producers of "Resident Evil" 1 and 2. I will be portraying the role of a ninja warrior assassin, Ayane. I will be undergoing weeks of martial arts training in China this mid-March for the film. I am excited because it's so near the Philippines. I would love to visit for a few days if my work schedule permits it."

Her dancing background has made it easier for her to land difficult roles that include complicated fighting scenes. Just like Zhang Ziyi, Natassia has a professional background in ballet. "When I was a young girl, I trained at the London Studio Dance Center in London, Norwegian Opera Ballet in Norway, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, and the Goh Ballet in Vancouver, Canada. Since then, I took on roles in 'The Nutcracker,' 'Swan Lake,' and other performances that I could hardly remember!"

In spite of the fame and the success, one would be quite surprised as she expressed her profound thoughts when asked what makes her life interesting.

She has traveled all over the world, shot a commercial with Brad Pitt for Edwin Jeans in Japan, became the Noxzema girl after Felicity's Keri Russell. One good movie is coming after another. What more can a girl want?

When she turned 20 on Jan. 19, she said: "Life is not about making movies. It is not about making money. And it is not definitely about fame. When you die, God doesn't care about that. You die with all the right choices you make, and it is the pureness of the heart and soul that truly matters."

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The Best of New York & L.A. Retail Havens
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ONE OF her many Philippine glossy mag covers

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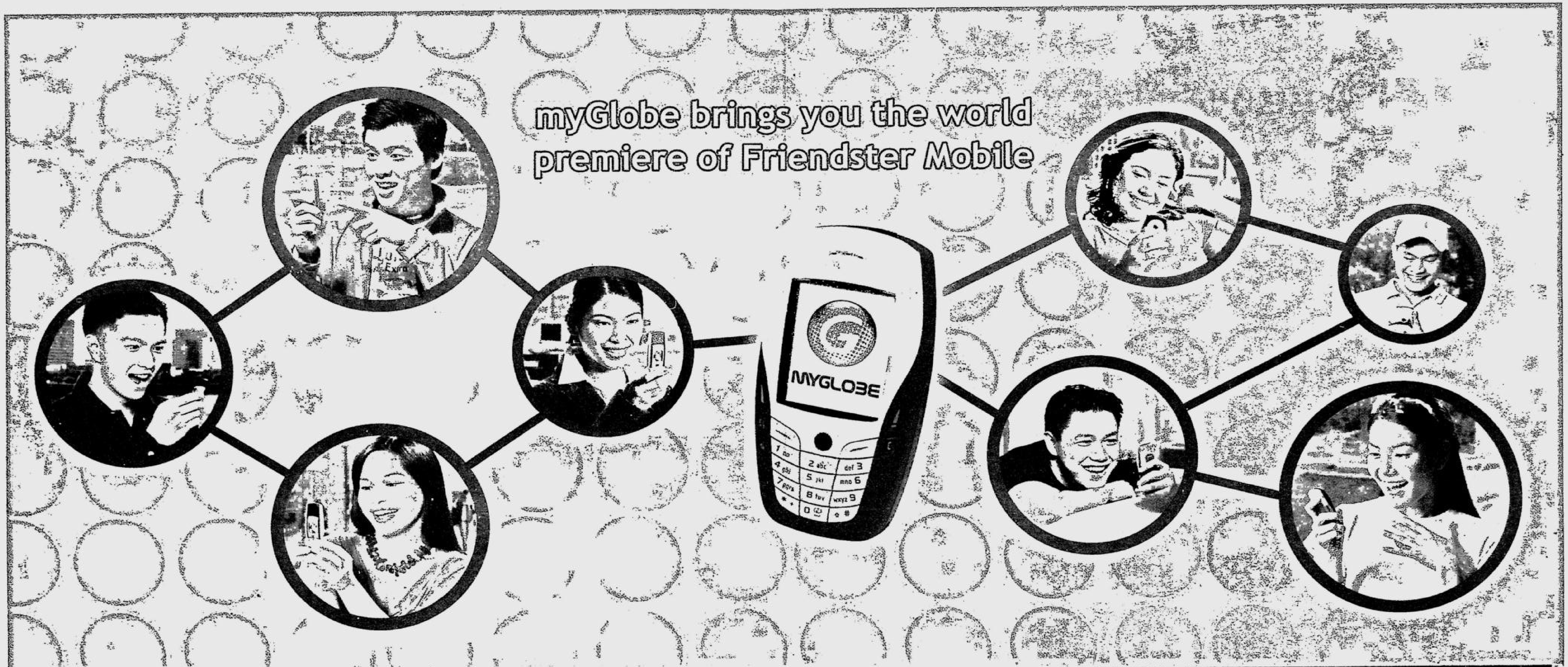

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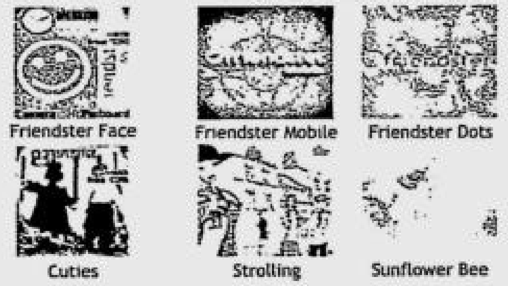

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Confessions of an ex-Rastafari wannabe

OUT THE WINDOW

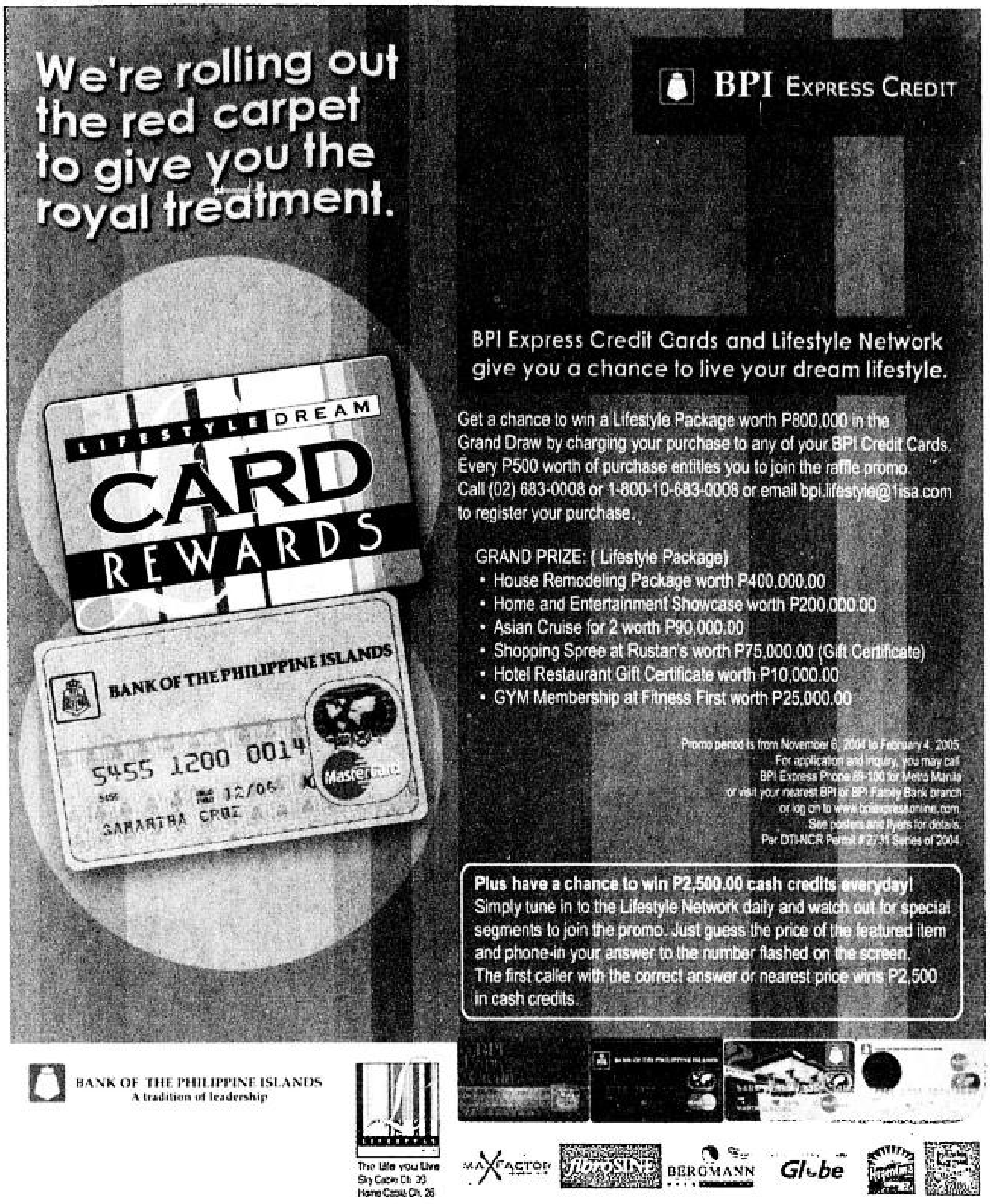
Tals Diaz

SO I'M not black. And no matter how hard I could try, my stick-straight hair will never weave itself into dreadlocks. And I wasn't born in Jamaica. But I love reggae. Hey, one out of four isn't so bad, is it?

And so it came to pass, armed with a superficial understanding of such sacred tenets, I once thought I could convert to Rastafarianism. I was 16 years old then, madly in love with Bob Marley, and believed ALL Jamaicans to be cooler-than-thou.

Thus, I out-posed even the biggest white poser hanging out in a fake reggae bar in Nebraska. I thought being "Rasta" was about listening to reggae and greeting everyone, "Ey mon!" and describing anything cool as "irie," and thanking 'Jah' when the opportunity conveniently presented itself. I had no clue, bless my naïve 16-year-old poser heart without Internet back then, about the sociopolitical and historical dimensions behind the

CONFESSIONS/ D3



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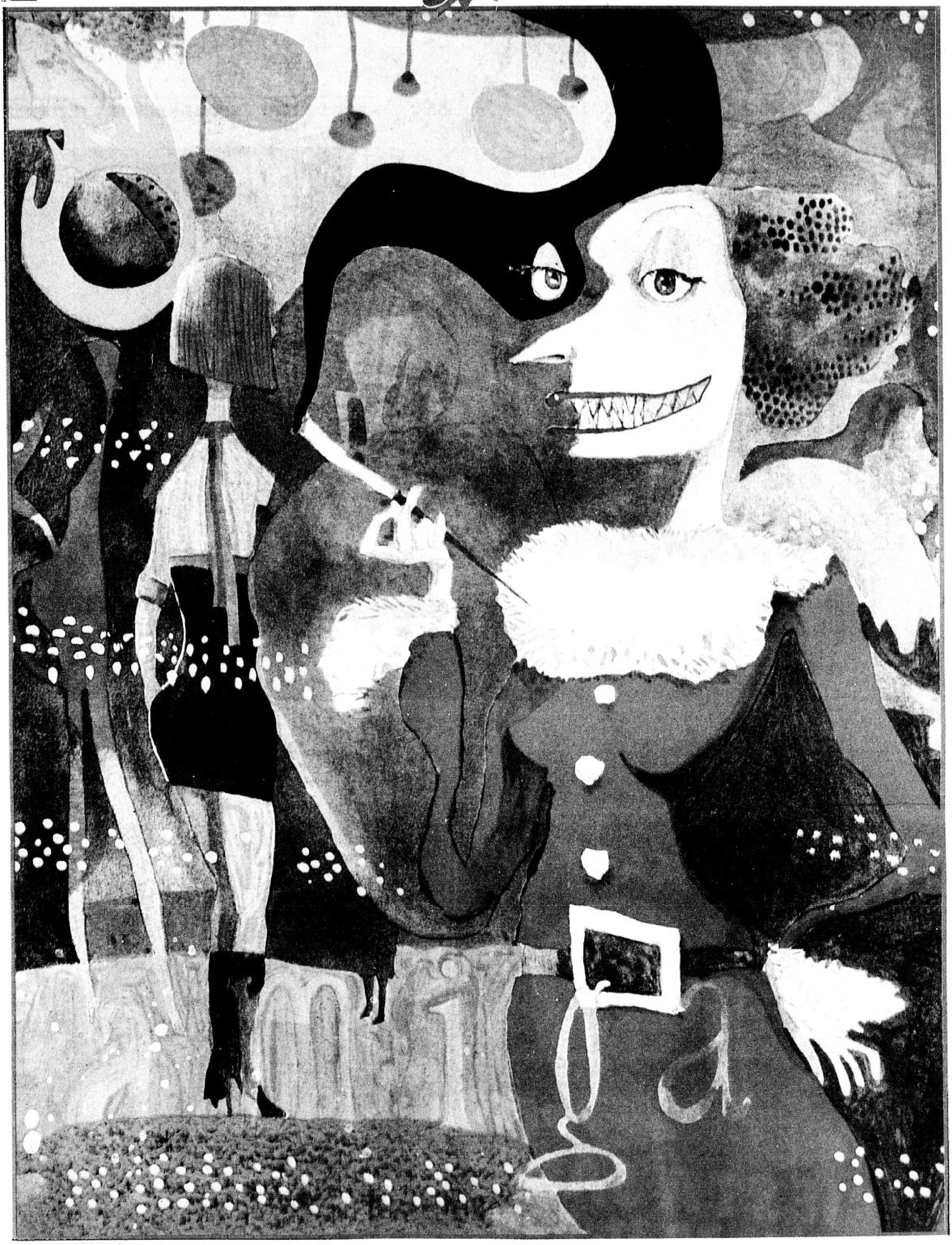


Think happy thoughts

The secret of significant existence is not just to live, but to have something worthwhile to live for

By Jojo Nones and Tim Yap
Original Artwork by Jason Moss

LITTLE Kimy finds herself waking up to strange noises in the middle of the night. There are creepy scratching sounds and they seem to be coming from outside her room's window.

Beads of sweat form on Little Kimy's forehead. Slowly, dread consumes her. She hides under the covers, almost shaking with fright. For a brief moment, she panics, not knowing what to do. Then all of a sudden, the words and music just pour out of her mouth. She starts singing, "Mary had a little lamb, its fleece was white as snow…"

Little by little, her fear seems to go away. The more she sings, the more she remembers that fun afternoon she spent at Aunt Tilda's fine rest house in Tagaytay, playing with her cousins Imogen and Halle, singing "Mary Had a Little Lamb" over and over until their throats got sore.

Though still a bit jumpy, Little Kimy finally gets the nerve to check out what's causing the noise outside her window. Somehow, the fun song and the fun memories have made her a little braver. She looks through her window… and holds her breath.

To her relief, the creepy scratching sound was nothing to be afraid of after all. It was just her family's cat, Tabby, trying to claw its way up into her room.

She lets the cat in; it circles around for a bit then proudly plops itself onto one of her pillows. As she makes her way back to bed, Little Kimy notices that, in the bright moonlight coming through the window, Tabby has fleece as white as snow. She smiles…

It didn't take much genius for Little Kimy to realize that her only weapon against the sad, sorry, crippling emotion of fear was another emotion, one potent enough to help her vanquish the dark assault of terror, one compelling enough to give her strength back.

Happiness, glee, delight—weapons of the light, valued gifts of the right. One happy thought, one flicker of hope, one sliver of luminosity is sometimes all it takes. Just one smile can brighten up what was once gloomy; just one peal of laughter can liven up what was once murky.

In times like these, in times awash with the aftermath of ruin, of destructive forces both natural and unnatural, of monsters both outside and in, of fears both sad and confused, the ability to seek joy when there is hardly any is what redeems us from the pit of misery. It's what makes us continue to trust in an uncertain future. It's what keeps us from surrendering to the onslaught of shadows. It's what holds faith in our hearts, sanity in our minds, music and nursery rhymes in our souls.

Think happy thoughts. It's a simple yet powerful remedy for wounds inflicted by huge waves of sorrow.

Remember the good times. Look forward to better days ahead. Delight in the thrill of not knowing what worldwide goodness will amount from unwelcome tragedy brought about by a sneaky tsunami. Smile at the prospect of meeting someone more exciting than the cute jerk who just dumped you for Angelina Jolie. Relish the exciting Friday night dance party at Government waiting for you at the end of this hellish work week. Revel in the possibility of co-starring with Jennifer Garner in a Hollywood film—known to the world as Lina Teal—after spending lackluster years modeling in Manila as Natassia Malthe.

Overcome grief. Celebrate life.

The secret of significant existence is not just to live, but to have something worthwhile to live for. Like Little Kimy and her unforgettable fun afternoon at Aunt Tilda's Tagaytay rest house with Imogen and Halle, we all have something worthwhile to live for, we all have something powerful enough to defeat fear and sorrow. And by thinking happy thoughts, we keep that power, that light, that positive force, just within reach.

Confessions of an ex-Rastafari wannabe

From page D1

Rastafarian religion.

Wait... did I just mention "religion?" Ah yes, now there's the first sign of a hungry man! Imagine my sheepish face when I found out that Rastafarianism is in fact a religion that has about a million followers to this day worldwide. Commonly known as "Rasta," the movement saw a growth spurt starting in 1975, largely due to Bob Marley's use of reggae music as an expression of Rastafarianism.

Rasta 101

Rastafarianism emerged out of the island of Jamaica in the later half of the 20th century. It was born out of the darkest depression and conditions that the descendants of African slaves in Jamaica had to live in. From the slums of Kingston's waterfront arose a movement so pure, full of love and devoid of anger—the basic principles behind the philosophy of the Rastafari faith. Thus, the battlecry of the movement was Freedom of Spirit, Freedom from Slavery and Freedom of Africa.

Its roots trace back to the philosophical teachings of Jamaican black nationalist Marcus Garvey who preached black self-empowerment and denounced colonial indoctrination and a Eurocentric world view.

Garvey once prophesied, "Look to Africa for the crowning of a Black King, he shall be the Redeemer." That was fulfilled in 1930 in the person of Ethiopia's crowned king, Haile Selassie, or Ras Tafari Makonnen, who claimed to be a direct descendant of King David. Ras Tafari was the earthly manifestation of Christian doctrine, and thus, his followers became known as Rastafarians.

So what's with the hair?

These days, dreadlocks have become synonymous with reggae music and the free-spirited, ganja-smoking, nonconformist lifestyle that it is naturally affixed to. Yet just as we sport many things because they point north in our inner compasses of cool (Che Guevara T's, anyone?), we are highly susceptible to falling prey to ignorance of deeper significance.

BOB
MARLEY
and the Wailers
REBEL MUSIC

Dreadlocks, in this case, are rooted (get it, "rooted?" OK, moving on) in a religious belief. In many religions, locked hair symbolizes a connection with God. In Rastafarianism, dreadlocks pertain to the image of the lion of Judah.

The old-generation Rastafarians wore their locked hair as a symbol of their belief in nonviolence, unity, and their stance against Babylon (tyrannical oppression). Of course, today, many dread-heads sport that knotty-but-nice look to emanate counterculture cool.

To quote Bouneith Inejnema Naba of "The History of Dreadlocks," where Rastafarians once shunned everything from Babylon, such as soda, alcohol and cigarettes, modern Rastas are often seen smoking, wearing designer clothing, eating meat and drinking beer. "Wearing your hair 'naturally' has become more of a status symbol than a spiritual decision, and people begin locking their hair so that they are seen as conscious, Afrocentric, or different, rather than for honest spiritual and conscious reasons," he said.

Back to the music

Given all this well-needed wellspring of information about Rastafarianism, then I may as well conclude that—yes, I was such a poser.

Or was I?

If I dig deeper and think really hard in an attempt to redeem myself, I'd conclude that what first got me into the Rasta culture was the music. Reggae songs, particularly the lyrics of Bob Marley, resonated with the values—from spreading peace to uniting all with One Love—values that I believed in back then, and still believe in now.

I find it astonishing that the songs of the "Legend" soundtrack, which meant so much to me back in high school, still strike a deeper chord in me today. Such is the timeless quality of a good song; the words may not change but because we progress as human beings within the variables of Time and Experience, it is but natural that levels of meaning multiply.

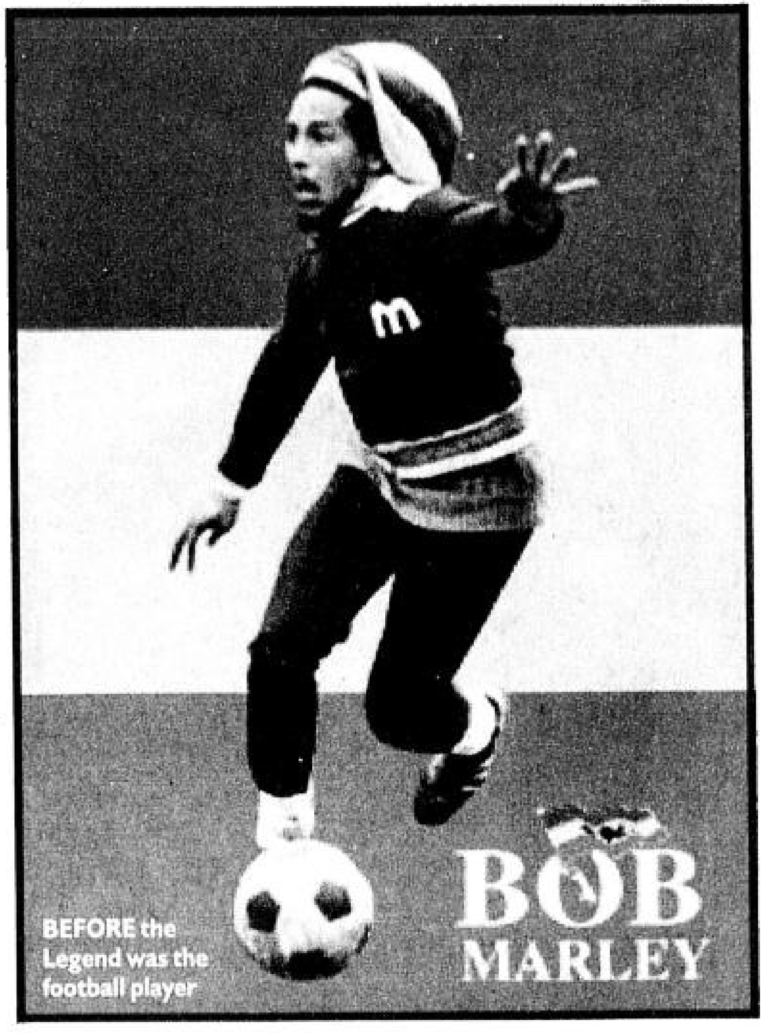
If "Get Up, Stand Up" back then was about standing up for my rights as a high school student who could not comprehend a conformist, mindless sheep way of thinking, then it isn't too far from what those words first inspired, as a call for solidarity against authoritarian oppression.

Or take the song, "Waiting in Vain." It was first released about the time I was born, I was singing my heart out to it with my high school and college buds because apparently, "we all can relate," and up until now, in my late twenties, this song will still wind me up. I don't think this piece will ever be left rusty and unloved at the "gasgas" station.

Yet it was only recently that I've realized that "Waiting in Vain" still speaks to me today with a whole other vocabulary of meaning. Whereas before it was about longing for a love unrequited, I now recognize that it is about how one can actually fall in love with the act of waiting. The appeal of a distant lover is enhanced precisely because he is not easily accessible; the seasons are thus given sense because they are preludes of something to look forward to.

This is my message

What is it about reggae music, most especially Bob Marley's words, that is still able to cross ages and colors and borders? True, there is something to the happy vibe, springy ska and repetitive rhythm bass sound that gets everyone instantly into Happy Hour mode. But if I may present my humble theory: I believe it is because it expresses the beautiful ideologies of Rastafarianism.



BEFORE the Legend was the football player

The headlines today may be different from the '70s, but the struggles sing a familiar tune. There's a war out there that many of us don't believe in, there are people unjustly suffering from the greed of others, there are tyrannies borne out of hatred and misunderstanding. There's "So Much Trouble in the World" indeed.

Yet from out of these dark depressions and conditions still arise the ideals of unity, love and respect. And then there is freedom—the one thing that gives us personal dignity in our lives.

Look beyond the dreads, it's reggae's Rasta that roots us all.

Get up, stand up, and email me at: inca_orange@yahoo.com

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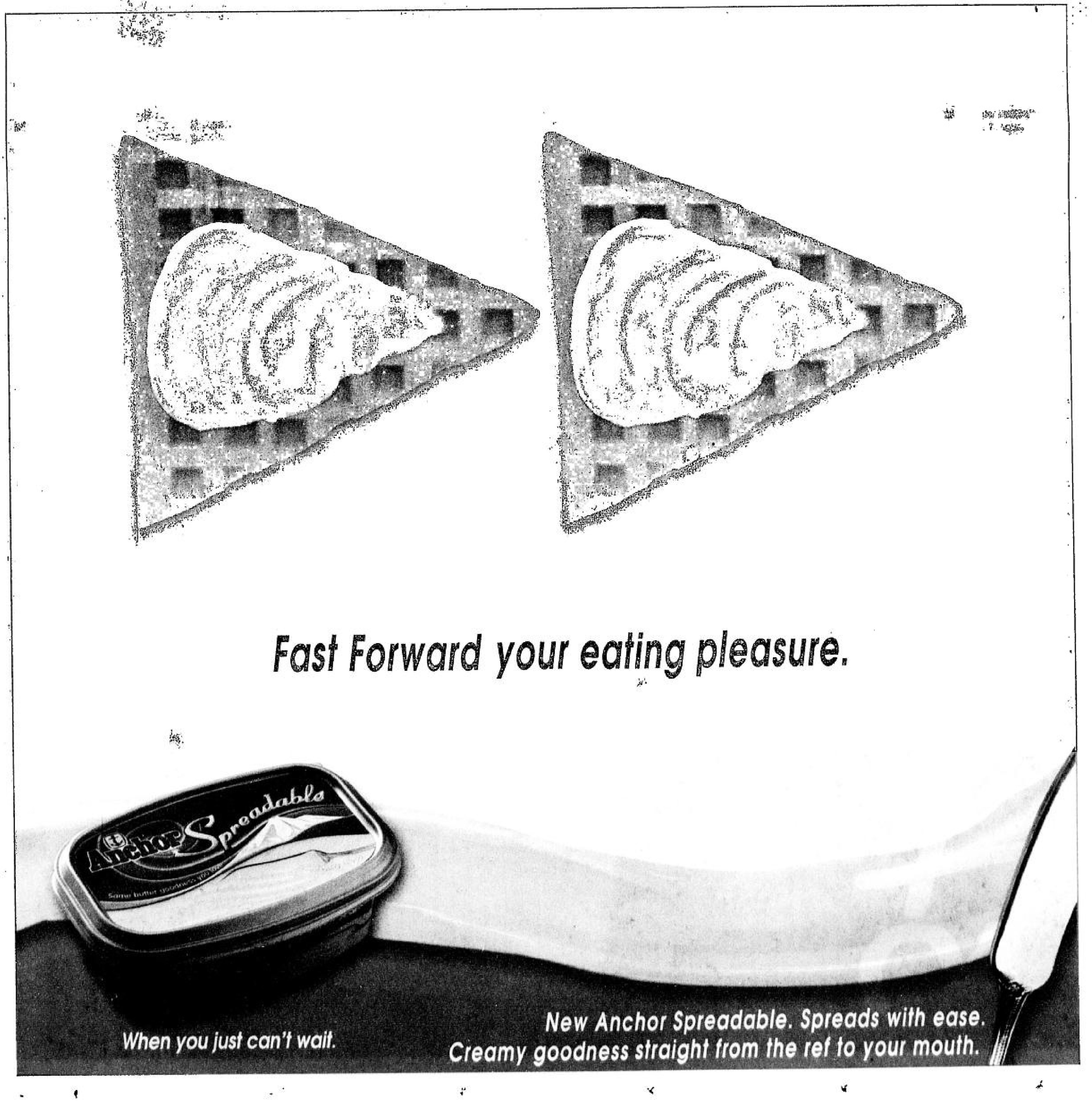
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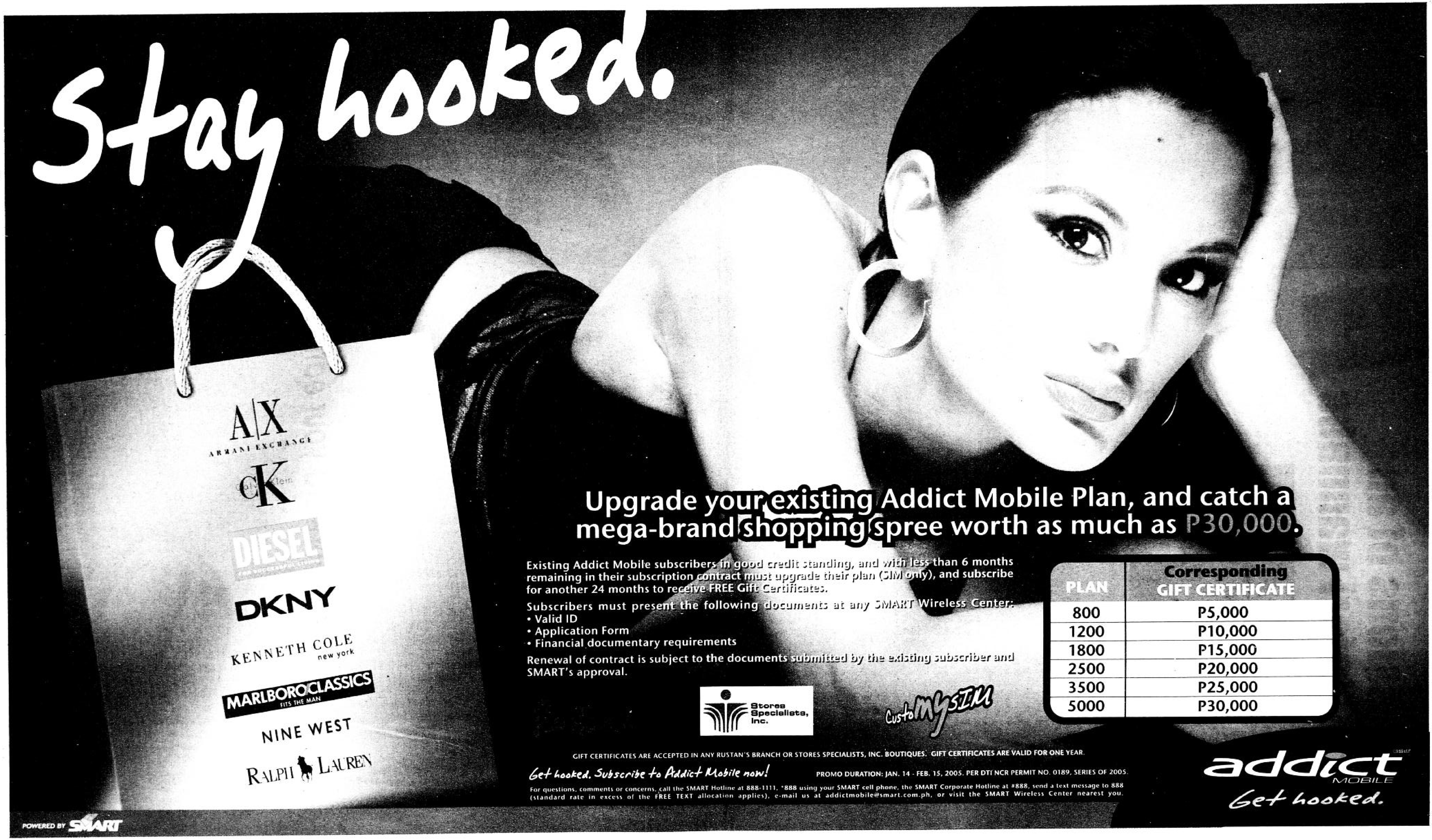

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Pelicula Loca!

24/7

Janine Cuenca-Dario

CINEPHILES and movie enthusiasts will be glad to know that critically-acclaimed Australian movies are the week-long fare at the UP Film Institute Cine Adarna, (University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City) next week, Jan. 24 to 28, at 7 p.m.

In celebration of Australia's National Day, five movies will be featured including Japanese Story (2003) which won Toni Collette ("Sixth Sense") an Australian Film Institute best actress award. Another interesting movie will be "The Last Wave" (1977) with screenplay and direction by Peter Weir, who was responsible for one of my favorite movies, the inspiring "Dead Poets Society." Weir was an Oscar nominee last year for "Master and Commander." Both Collette and Weir are from Down Under and are now certified Hollywood heavyweights.

For more details, please call the Cultural Officer of the Australian Embassy at 757-8135 or e-mail Elizabeth.Reymundo@dfat.gov.au

Other foreign films may be viewed weekly at Instituto Cervantes (T: 526-1482 to 85), Alliance Francaise (T: 895-7585), CCP Dream Theater (T: 832-1125) which hosts the monthly Italian Film Festival. You can vote your favorite film festival in the 24/7 Nocturnal Awards poll by texting REACT FESTIVAL _Your Choice_ and send to 2910 for Globe, Smart and Sun subscribers.

Jan. 22, Saturday

'80s Disco: Mystique with Boyet Almazan at Teak, Rockwell
Chillout: Lounge with Ellan Habayeb at Paseo Uno, Mandarin Oriental
Deep Groove feat. House DJs at Mati, Rockwell
Jazz Trio at Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental Manila
Latin Band Fuego at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3
R&B/Hip-hop: Rocky Rock at Absinth, Greenbelt 3
R&B: Dancehall Saturdays at V Bar, Glorietta 2
House music at Bed, Malate
House DJ Kevin Ruiz at Government, Makati Ave.
House DJs Adrian Cuenca and Martin Pulgar at Temple, Greenbelt 2
Reggae band Spy at '70s Bistro, QC
Pop band Side A, Barbie's Cradle at Dish, ABS-CBN Compound, Q.C.
Big Night Out band at Conway's, Makati Shangri-la

Jan. 23, Sunday

Cheese Bar & Buffet at Peninsula Manila Lobby
Repertory Philippines' "Oh Romeo" at Onstage, Greenbelt 1
Tanghalang Pilipino's "The School for Scandal" at CCP
"Living Art" exhibit at National Museum
"Crossings" exhibit at Ayala Museum
Amazing Bird Show at Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center
Paseo Uno Trio during lunch at Paseo Uno, Mandarin Oriental Manila
Children's Activity and Reading Corner, lunchtime at Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental
Tindog Pilipinas! The Concert at the Cultural Center of the Philippines

Jan. 24, Monday

Acoustic R&B with Release band at Temple, Greenbelt 2
Cinema Australia: "Japanese Story" at the UP Film Institute
Ladies Night at The Conservatory, Peninsula Manila
Latin Band Guarana at Conway's, Makati Shangri-la
Latin singer Mal Castro at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3
Parokya Ni Edgar at '70s Bistro, Q.C.
Rock/Motown: Wunjo at Absinth, Greenbelt 3

Jan. 25, Tuesday

New Minstrels band at Dish, ABS-CBN Compound, QC
Cinema Australia: "He Died with a Felafel In His Hand" at the UP Film Institute
Divine Ladies Night at Absinth, Greenbelt 3
Flintstones & the Gang at Conway's, Makati Shangri-la
Latin Band Guarana at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3
R&B/Hiphop: Jon Herrera and Stephen Ku at V Bar, Glorietta 2
Retro '60s, '70s: The Spirit of '67 at Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental Manila
Reuben Laurente at Calesa Bar, Hyatt Regency, Roxas Blvd

Jan. 26, Wednesday

Cinema Australia: "The Interview" at the UP Film Institute
House: DJ Manolet Dario at V Bar, Glorietta 2
Retro '80s at Bed, Malate
R&B: DJ Steve Mills at Absinth, Greenbelt 3
Latin Bands at Havana, Greenbelt 3 and Malate
Wednesday Nights at the Museum at Ayala Museum
Latin: Suave Rotina at Diamond Hotel
Jazz Trio at Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental Manila
Retro: Rock n' Revival at Conway's, Makati Shangri-la
Retro: Flintstones at Dish, ABS-CBN Compound, QC
Latin: Mai Castro at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3
Pido at '70s Bistro, QC
Rock n' Revival at Conway's, Makati Shangri-la

Jan. 27, Thursday

Hiphop/R&B: Silk Thursdays with Steve Mills at Temple, Greenbelt 2
Rock/House: Rock Night & DJ Patch at Absinth, Greenbelt 3
Red Letter Day at V Bar, Glorietta 2
2Good2BThursdays at Bed, Malate
Latin Bands at Havana, Greenbelt 3 and Malate
VIP Barkada Nights at Government, Makati Ave.
Christine Carlos at Elks Club, Corinthian Plaza Bldg., Paseo de Roxas, Makati
Jazz Trio at Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental Manila
Spirit of '67 at Conway's, Makati Shangri-la
True Faith, K24/7 at Dish, ABS-CBN Compound, QC

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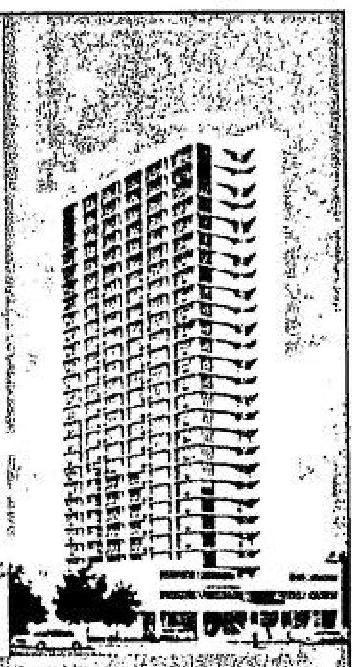
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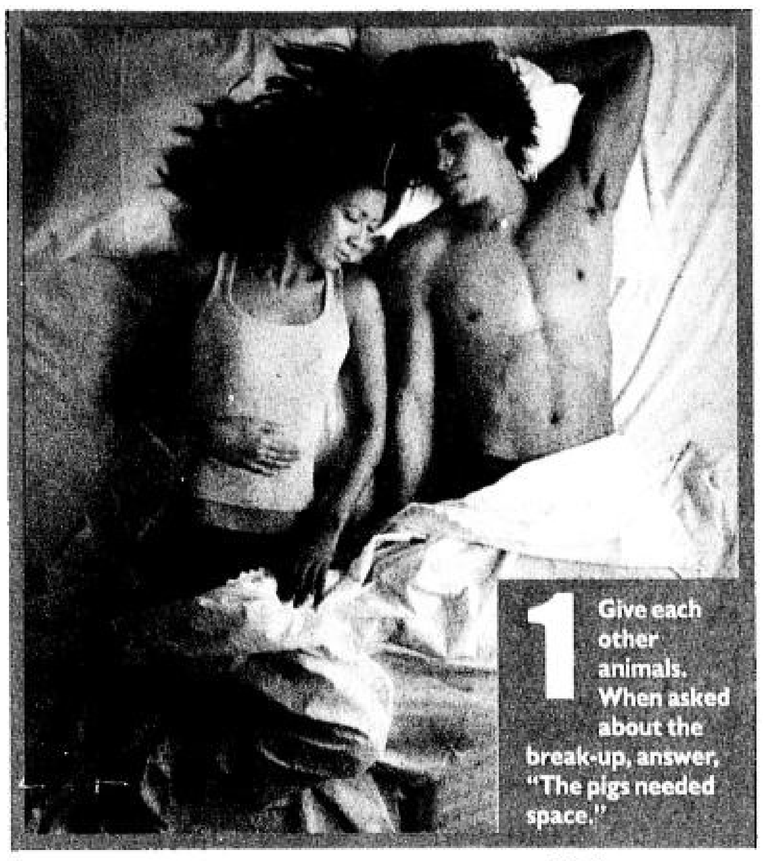
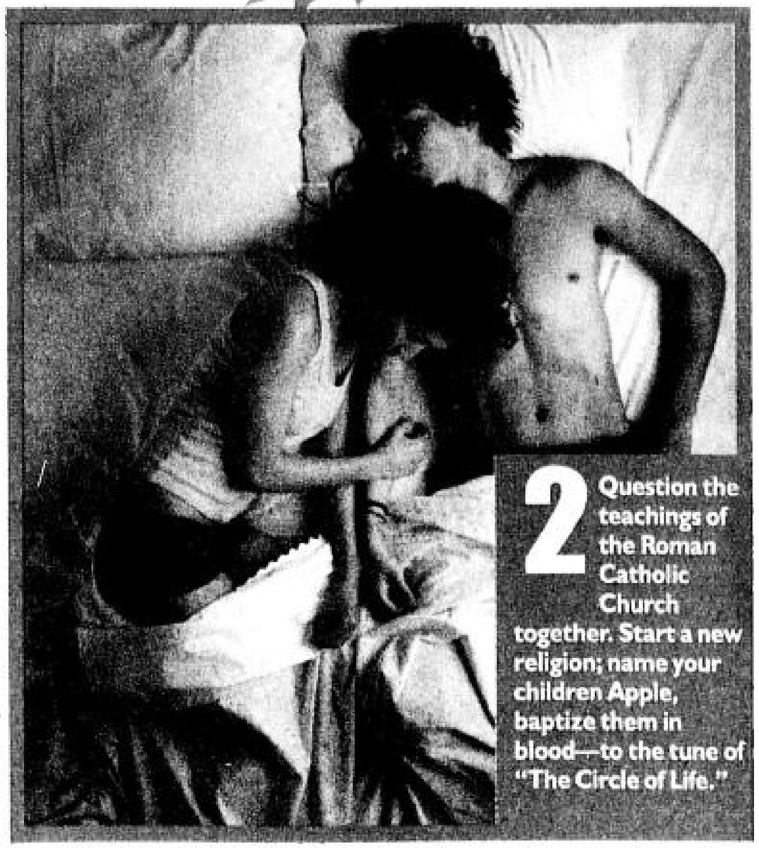

1 Give each other animals. When asked about the break-up, answer, "The pigs needed space."


2 Question the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church together. Start a new religion; name your children Apple, baptize them in blood—to the tune of "The Circle of Life."

3 Co-produce a film—the type of film only you would watch. And no, I'm not talking Bennifer's "Gigli." I'm talking "Mano Po 3"-ish.

10 tips for celeb couples who want to stay together

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DO YOU want to split up but the movie's coming out and your managers say no? Are there wedding plans and live TV coverage you can't screw up? Is *manang* gonna cry when you announce you're not together? Is some mobile network trying to get you two to pose with a phone on your ear?

I know, it's hard. Take it from me. My last split has gotten me a stubble and a waist line of 50—and I'm not even a *kapuso*! The pressure you'll feel when on the brink of that big split does cause acne, and *manang* is gonna bludgeon you with her El Shaddai hanky when she finds out you and that other *artista* are not making babies anymore. Your split is gonna hurt your next movie so much, you'll feel it. And if I were your manager, I'd arrange a death right away. (Car crash. *Bato-bato*-pick.)

Well, don't cry, little one. Take a look at Brad and Jen and see where they are. There's Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman (wait, discount that one—Nicole had to French kiss a 10-year-old boy in her last movie). There have been celebrity break-ups that have gone, not necessarily nice and smooth, but well.

Brad and Jen, Tom and Nicole. Oops, wrong examples—you'll never be like them. See, the thing is, these couples had enough acting talent to get them through the hard times. Photo ops, beach trips when you know the paparazzi's following, interviews and strategic entrances at movie premieres require acting talent. Acting talent, and not to mention class.

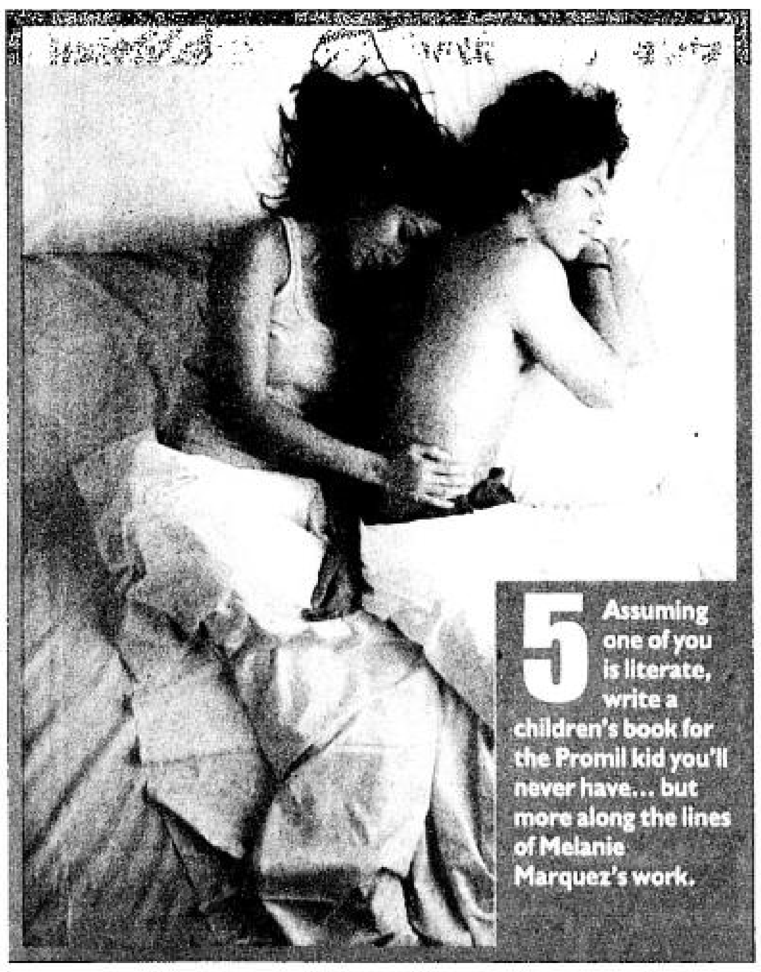
You, if you're a regular on TV and have a sitcom, are totally devoid of acting talent and class. If you either host a noontime show, are a gossip show anchor, star in a *teleserye*, or have a love team, you must get deported.

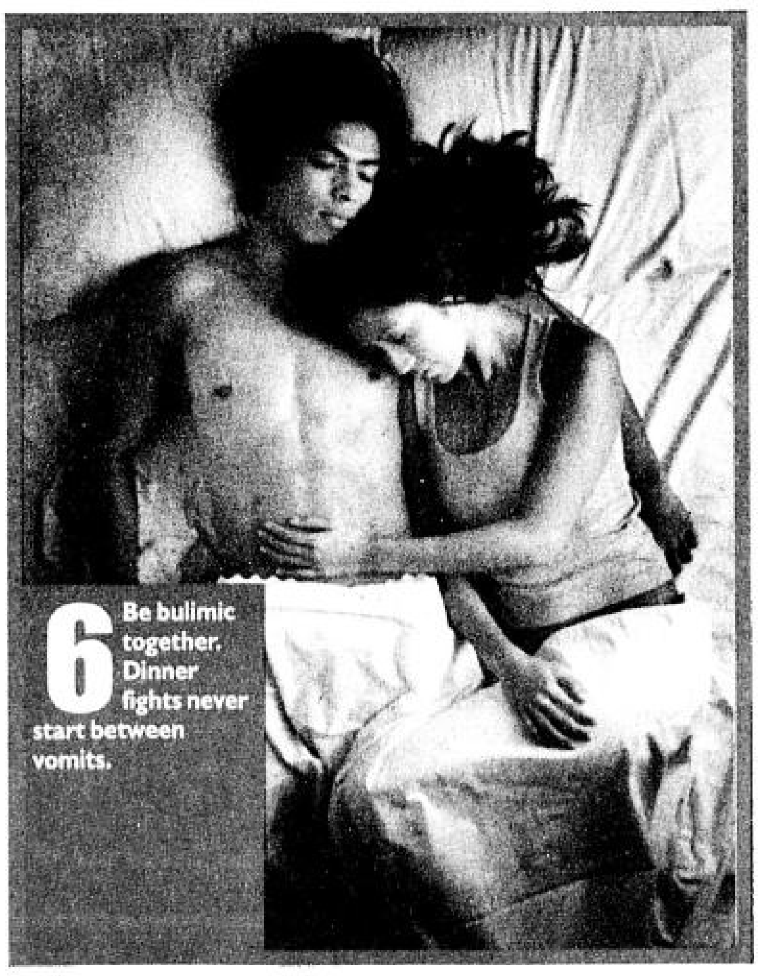
But if you can't help it, and you just have to break up with him or her because his or her novelty album didn't sell, you're gonna need tips to get you through those rough times. Follow these steps and I guarantee a Brad-Jen result, with a possibility of an Oscar, just like Nicole*.

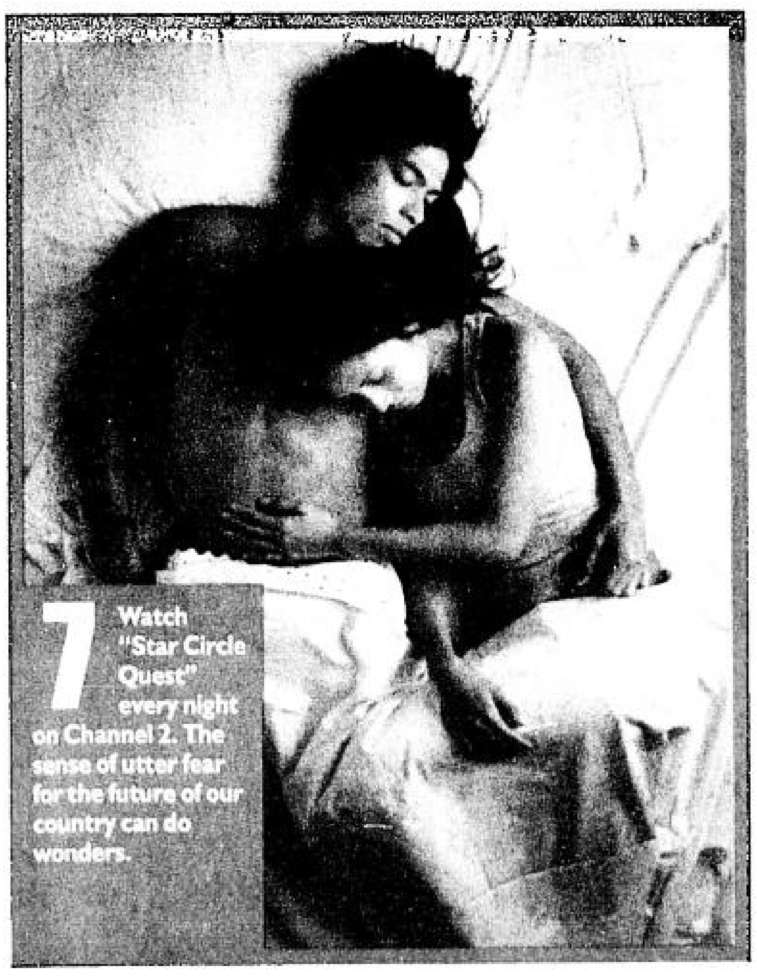
* Subject to DTI-NCR approval, and the mandate of God written on stone tablets falling on Mt. Apo.

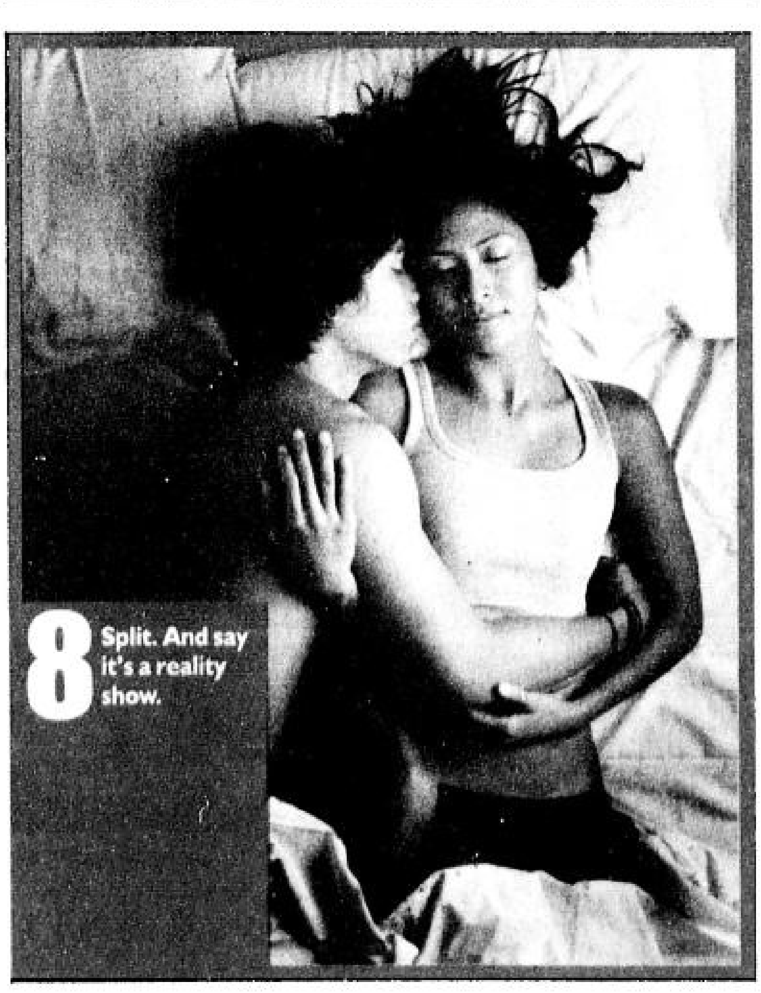
Cesar and Sunshine, Diet and Kristine, Bea and John Lloyd, Richard and Lucy, Richard and Angel, Ding Dong and Jessa, Sandy and Hero, Raymart and Claudine, Geneva and rapper KC, Heart and Geoff, Zsa Zsa and Dolphy, and The Starstruck Season One peeps, you have no idea how idiotic your names all sound. (One-peso dare: Say all those names 10 times straight without screwing up). Listen up, here are expert tips on how to ease/conceal/prevent a high-profile celeb split.

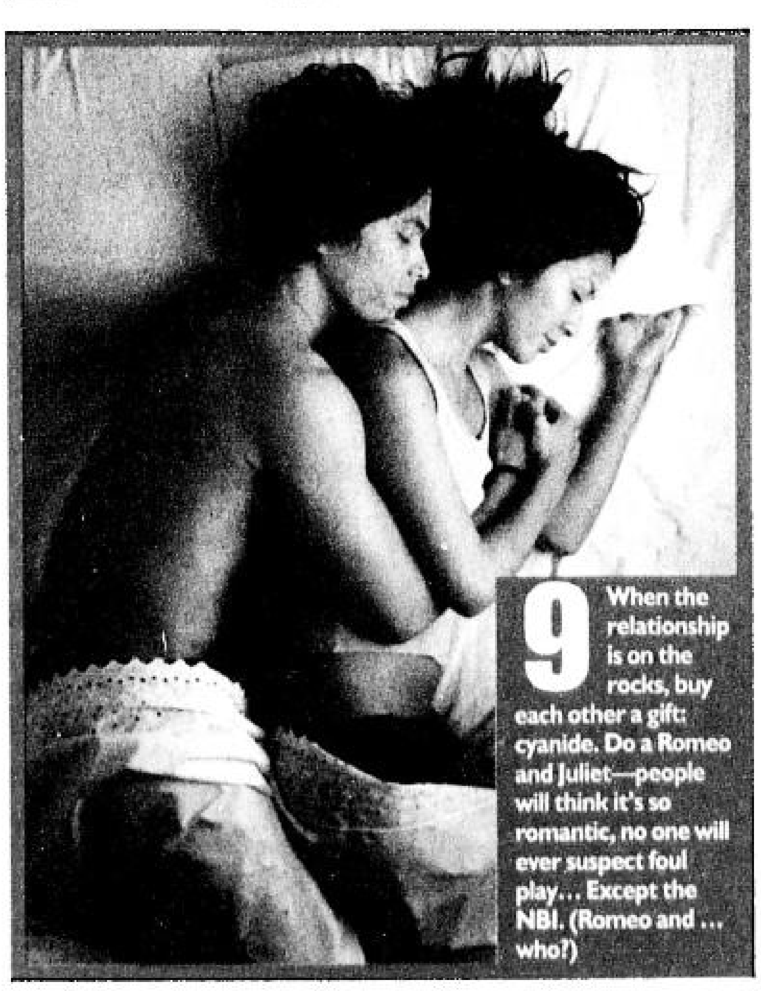
4 Pick a couple you both abhor. Laugh at their movies—they're probably doing the same, along with the rest of the population.

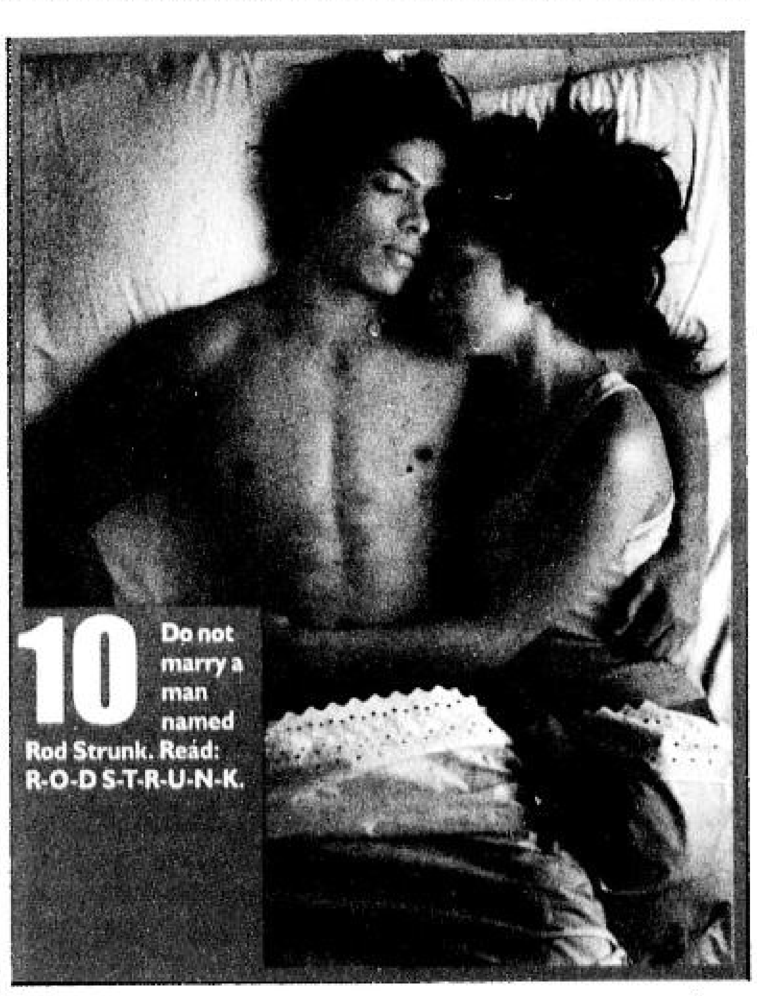

5 Assuming one of you is literate, write a children's book for the Promil kid you'll never have... but more along the lines of Melanie Marquez's work.


6 Be bulimic together. Dinner fights never start between vomits.


7 Watch "Star Circle Quest" every night on Channel 2. The sense of utter fear for the future of our country can do wonders.


8 Split. And say it's a reality show.


9 When the relationship is on the rocks, buy each other a gift: cyanide. Do a Romeo and Juliet—people will think it's so romantic, no one will ever suspect foul play... Except the NBI. (Romeo and ... who?)


10 Do not marry a man named Rod Strunk. Read: R-O-D S-T-R-U-N-K.

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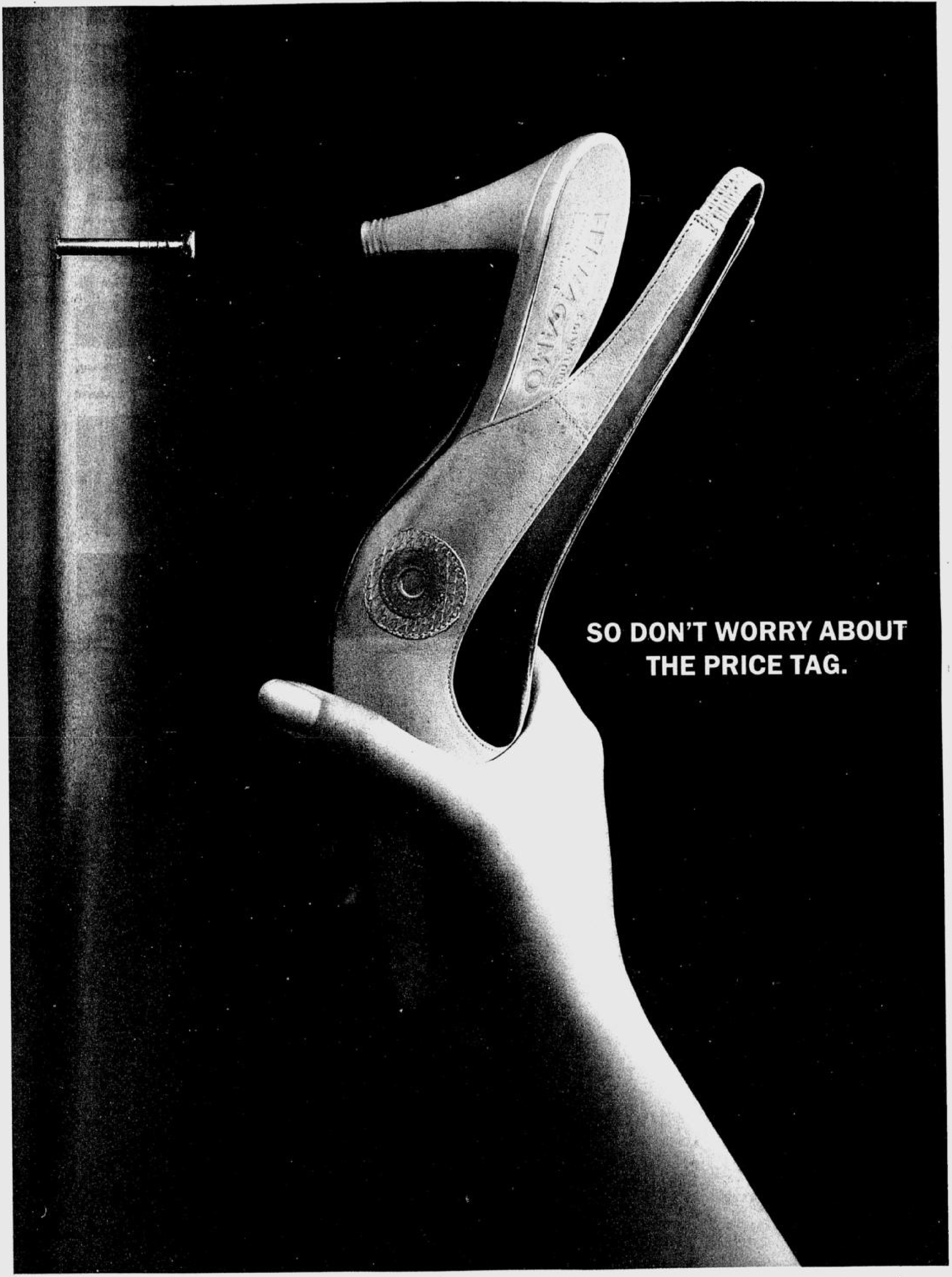

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   Ex: VISA MENNIE SO,AIG,1234,1000.25,102404,1808

Bi-monthly draws start on November 11, 2004.

*Purchases from January 1, 2004 [illegible] December 31, 2004, whichever comes first. [illegible] October 24, 2004 to January 23, 2005. [illegible]

VISA

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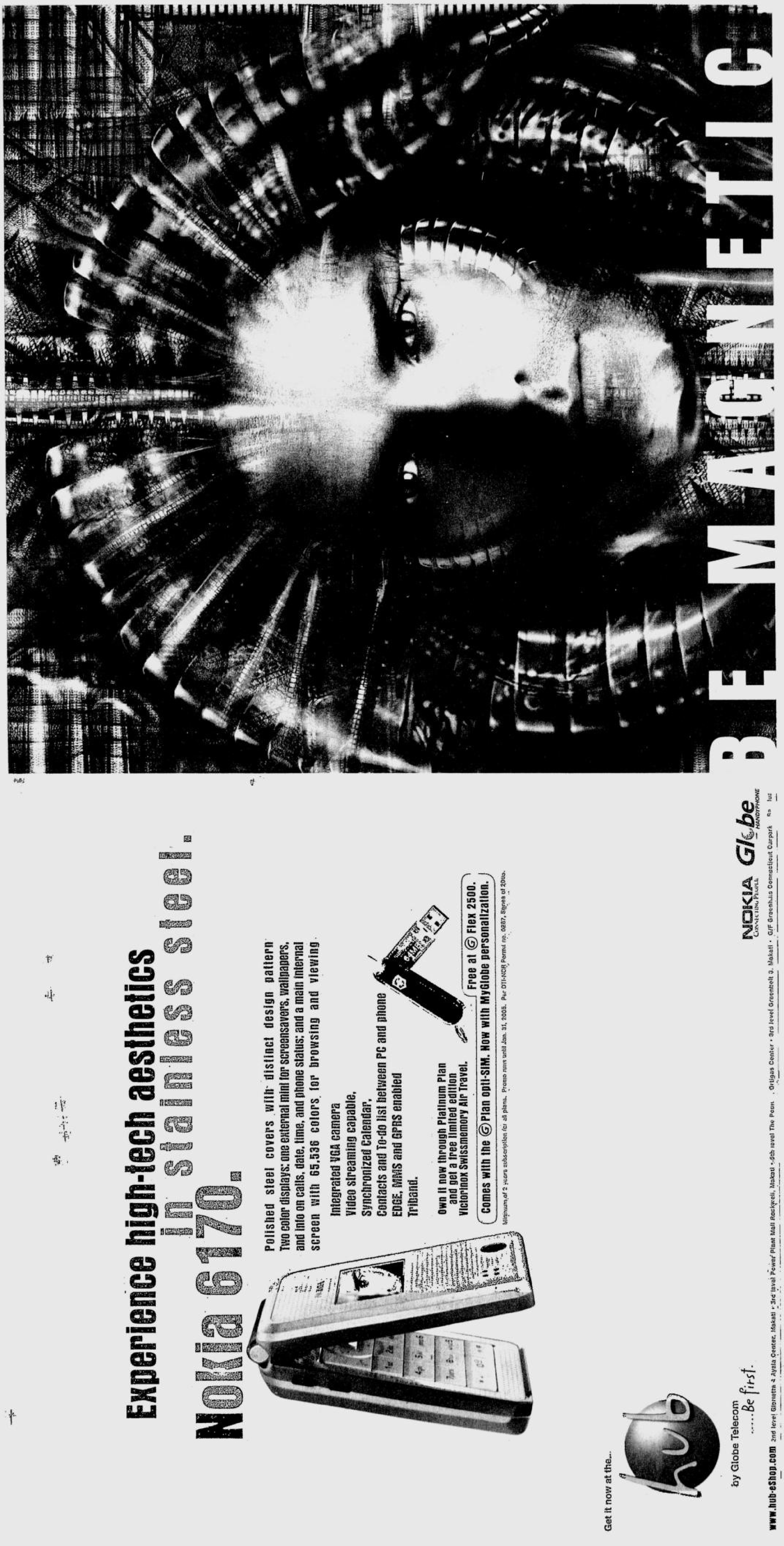

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NOKIA CONNECTING PEOPLE

Globe HANDYPHONE

Pelicula

From page E1

Latin Band Arriba at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3
Assumpta con Verde, featuring Route 70 band and retro DJ Boyet Almazan a fashion-dance party at NBC Tent
Cinema Australia: "The Year That My Voice Broke" at the UP Film Institute

Jan. 28, Friday

HouSessions with Manolet Dario at Teak, Rockwell
House/R&B: Jive Fridays with Jon Herrera and Stephen Ku at Temple, Greenbelt 2
House: Anthemia with Cao Ocampo at Absinth, Greenbelt 3
Gogoboy Fridays at Bed, Malate
Soul Fridays at V Bar, Glorietta 2
People Power Fridays with Bam del Valle at Government, Makati Ave.
Artstrong W/ Ayanna Picasso, 7 Shots at Dish, ABS-CBN Compound, QC
Latin: Mai Castro at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3
The Jerks at '70s Bistro, QC
Jazz Trio at Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental Manila
Cinema Australia: "The Last Wave" (1977) at the UP Film Institute

Jan. 29, Saturday

Martin Nievera and Patti Austin concert at the Araneta Coliseum
'80s Disco: Mystique with Boyet Almazan at Teak, Rockwell
Chillout: Lounge with Elian Habayeb at Paseo Uno, Mandarin Oriental
R&B/Hip-hop: Flava'D feat. Rocky Rock at Absinth, Greenbelt 3
Dancehall Saturdays at V Bar, Glorietta 2
House: Massive House at Bed, Malate
Back to House with Adrian Cuenca and Martin Pulgar at Temple, Greenbelt 2
Meat Packin' Saturdays with Kevin Ruiz at Government, Makati Ave.
Latin Band Fuego at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3
Pinikpikan at '70s Bistro, QC
Jazz Trio at Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental Manila

Jan. 30, Sunday

Cheese Bar & Buffet at Manila Peninsula Hotel Lobby
Repertory Philippines' "Oh Romeo" at Onstage, Greenbelt 1
Tanghalang Pilipino's "The School for Scandal" at CCP
"Unfolding Manila" exhibit at Lopez Museum
"Living Art" exhibit at National Museum
"Crossings" exhibit at Ayala Museum
Amazing Bird Show at Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center
Reggae Band at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3

Jan. 31, Monday

Rock/Motown: Mondaze with Wunjo at Absinth, Greenbelt 3
Acoustic R&B with Release band at Temple, Greenbelt 2
Call center Weekend at V Bar, Glorietta 2
Latin Bands at Havana, Greenbelt 3 and Malate
Ladies Night at The Conservatory, Peninsula Manila

Schedules may change without prior notice. Please check with the venues for updates. For more information, text 24/7 through your mobile phone and send to 2949 for Globe and 209 for Smart, log on to www.mag24-7.com or pick up your free copy of 24/7 Nocturnal Navigator at bars and restaurants around the city. Submit your schedules and comments every Wednesday to e-mail address events@mag24-7.com and mag24_7@yahoo.com or fax number 892-0689.

Super

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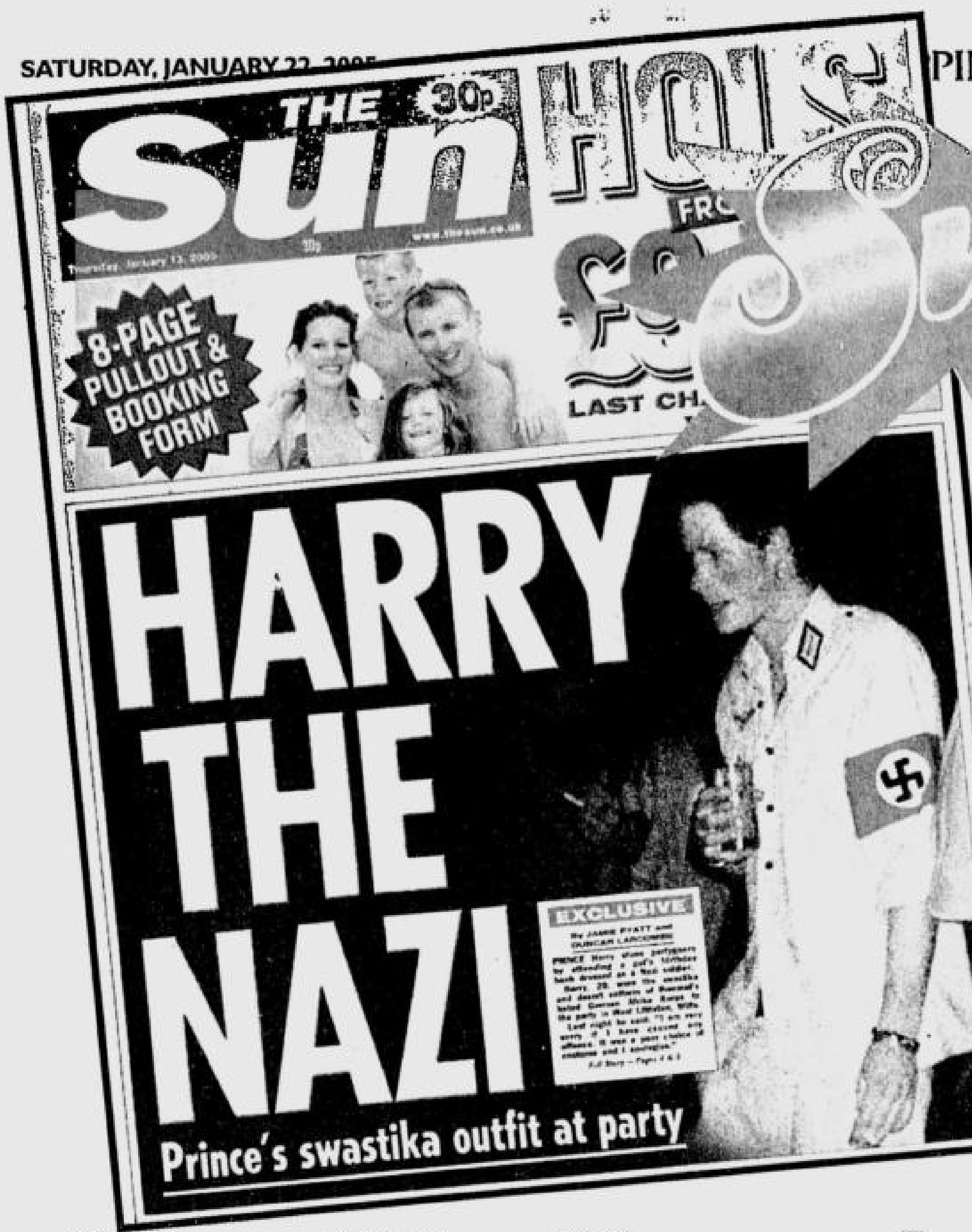
pop culture . entertainment . recreation


THE Sun 30p
8-PAGE PULLOUT & BOOKING FORM
LAST CH
HARRY THE NAZI
EXCLUSIVE
Prince's swastika outfit at party
© THE SUN

ROYAL WARDROBE MALFUNCTION. Prince Harry and his dazzling costume decision

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The 'Me Years'

"What is certain is that young men will always lead. Youth has it."
–**Hedi Slimane**, Dior Homme designer

Age against the machine

Gino de la Paz

ATTENTION, Prince Harry. You are officially a jackass.

Sometime last week, British newspaper The Sun broke the news that Queen Elizabeth's grandson had caused outrage around the world by wearing a Nazi uniform to a party. Talk about, *ahem*, a royal wardrobe malfunction.

Together with Prince Charles, extremely pissed-off Jewish groups demanded that Harry go visit Auschwitz, a concentration camp in southwest Poland, to learn more about the Holocaust and make amends for sporting a swastika armband and an army shirt with Nazi regalia. Were they all out of Ku Klux Klan outfits at the store? The report did not elaborate.

Perhaps feeling responsible since he was present when Harry made this dazzling costume decision, older bro William was also told to tag along on what could be their longest and least enjoyable holiday ever. "There will be no publicity and they will go with a Jewish charity," The Sun quoted the source as saying. Boohoo. At least it's more than all-day Saturday detention.

And as if putting a cherry-shaped turd on a mountain of crap during a shitstorm wasn't enough, Harry's little debacle segued two weeks before the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. Very classy, you blue-blooded bonehead! I hope your plane has "Schindler's List" back-to-back with "The Pianist" as in-flight entertainment. Wait, I take that back. I hope they play "Simone" back-to-back with "Gigli" instead! *Shudder.*

Inasmuch as a field trip to a death camp may help improve Harry's deviant behavior, I'd like to play devil's advocate and say it will take far more than that to make him feel genuinely sorry. (Remember, Prince Harry will never be king so he might as well party it up, right? That makes him less stuffier than future king Wills, hence he's automatically cooler, but I digress.)

Short of shoving him down a latrine and reenacting scenes from "Night" by Elie Wiesel, no Michael Moore internship, Dr. Phil session or "7th Heaven" marathon would be potent enough to temper the prince simply because he's 20. I repeat, 20—barely out of the reckless teenage years and at the onset of the most self-centered, totally irrepressible and way experimental stage in a young person's life. These are called the "Me Years." Out of the frying pan and into the proverbial fire? You bet your ass. I should know; I'm streaming through it as we speak.

Extension of adolescence

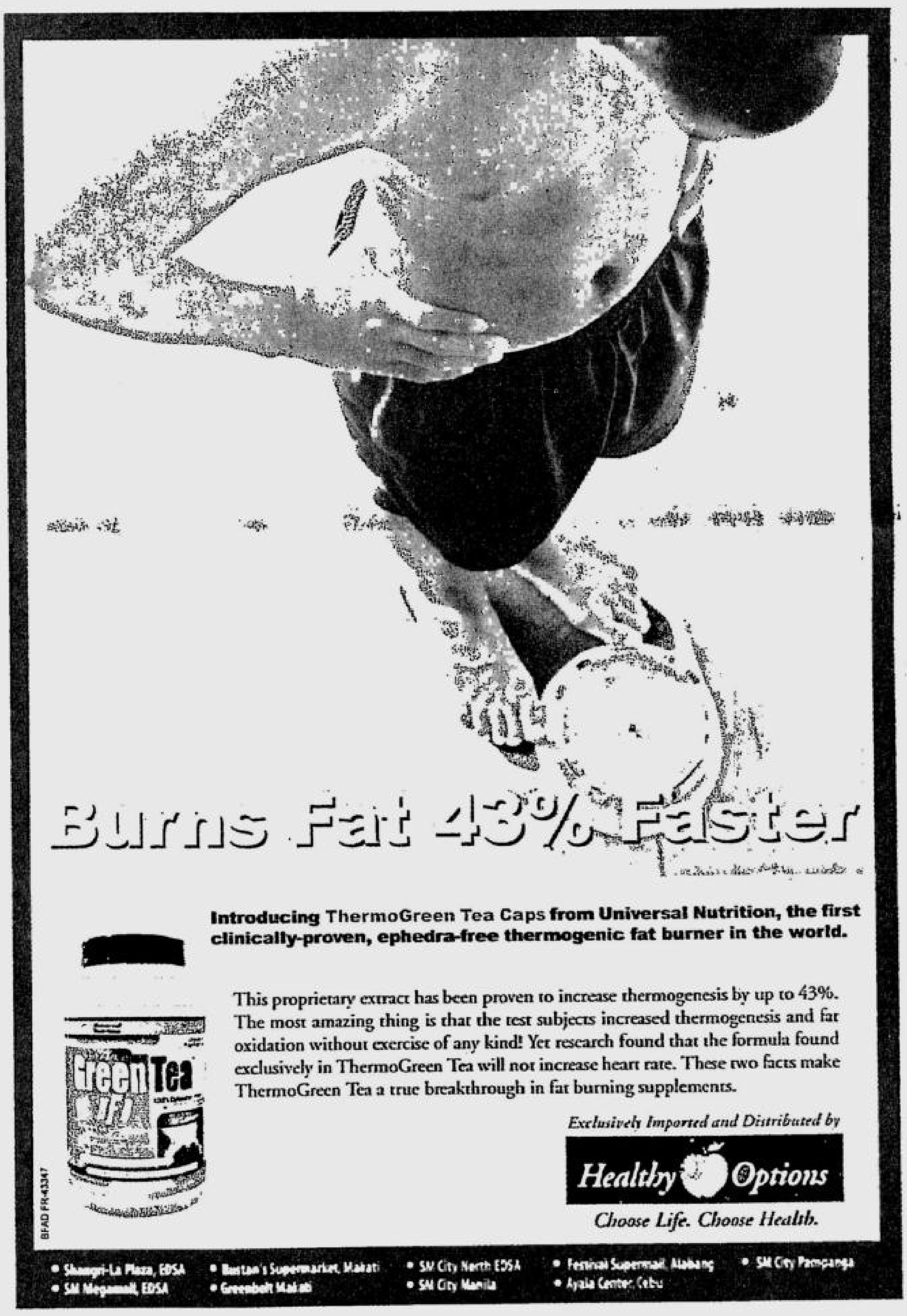
Coined by Mandi Norwood, a 38-year-old editor who mastered the girls-and-orgasms formula at British Cosmopolitan Magazine before taking up shop at the now-defunct Mademoiselle Magazine, the term "Me Years" refers to the irresponsible years right after college before serious things like career, kids and marriage kick in.

Another magazine insider summed it up this way: "The 'Me Years' is when you have a lot of freedom, your life is revolving around yourself, and you're having fun and figuring out what you want. Basically, you're most likely in your twenties, not married, no kids and having a blast. You're not yet jaded and cynical and you're experiencing a lot of stuff for the first time (first big paycheck, first true love, whatever). You're not tied down to any one person, place or job, but rather have a ton of options laid out before you." Does that sound vaguely familiar? If it does, read on.

In a 2002 article, the Guardian's Tammy Cohen also had this to say about this rather blissful stage of life: "Our 20s are the 'Me Years' where, through a process of experimentation and elimination, we get the chance to find out who we are and what we're about."

According to her, we experience more personal growth in our 20s than in any other decade of our adult lives. An extended adolescence, it seems that one's 20s is when we develop a circle of individuality and somehow, it's a person's only chance to be rightfully selfish and self-indulgent. Score.

THE 'ME YEARS'/ F3



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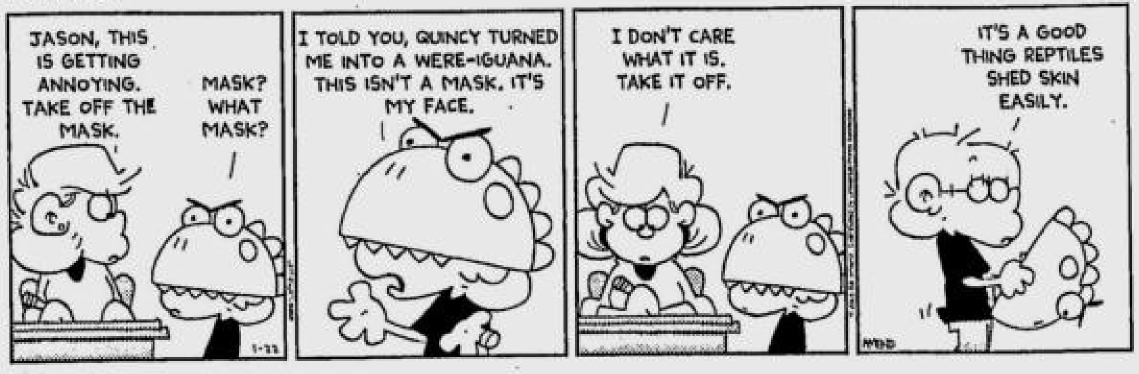
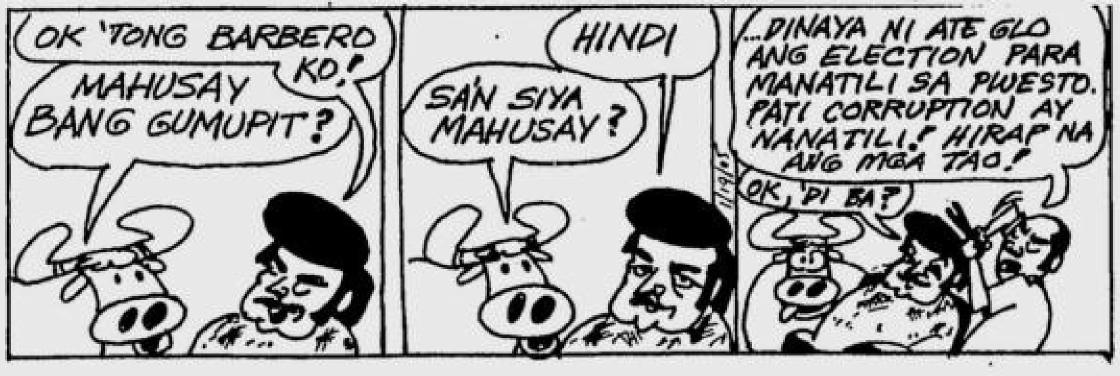
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


JASON, THIS IS GETTING ANNOYING. TAKE OFF THE MASK.
MASK? WHAT MASK?
I TOLD YOU, QUINCY TURNED ME INTO A WERE-IGUANA. THIS ISN'T A MASK. IT'S MY FACE.
I DON'T CARE WHAT IT IS. TAKE IT OFF.
IT'S A GOOD THING REPTILES SHED SKIN EASILY.
1-22

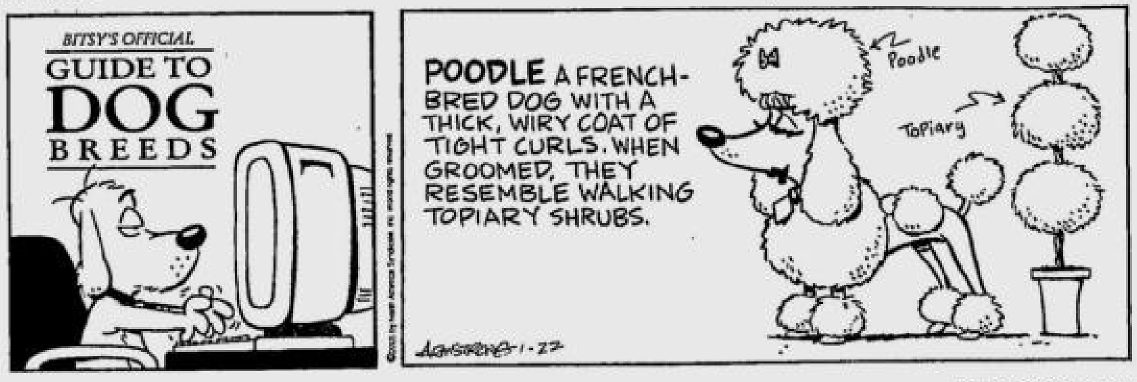
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


OK 'TONG BARBERO KO!
MAHUSAY BANG GUMUPIT?
HINDI
SA'N SIYA MAHUSAY?
...DINAYA NI ATE GLO ANG ELECTION PARA MANATILI SA PWESTO. PATI CORRUPTION AY NANATILI! HIRAP NA ANG MGA TAO!
OK, 'DI BA?

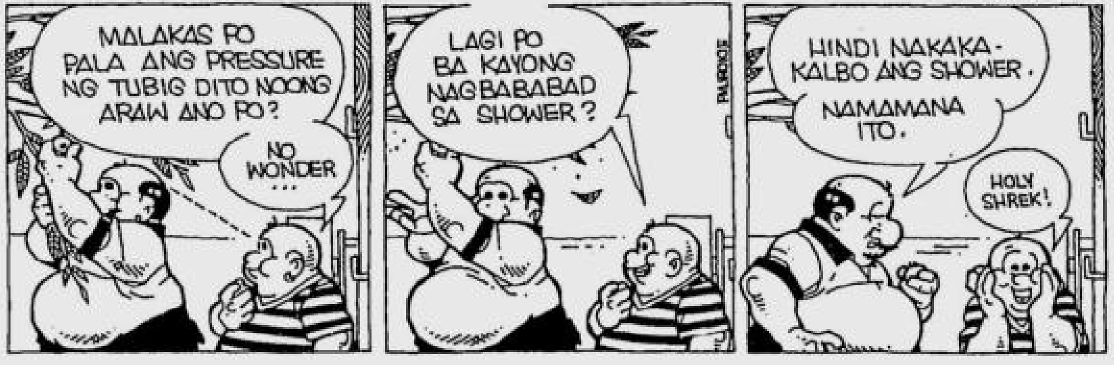
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


BITSY'S OFFICIAL GUIDE TO DOG BREEDS
POODLE A FRENCH-BRED DOG WITH A THICK, WIRY COAT OF TIGHT CURLS. WHEN GROOMED, THEY RESEMBLE WALKING TOPIARY SHRUBS.
Poodle
Topiary
ARMSTRONG 1-22

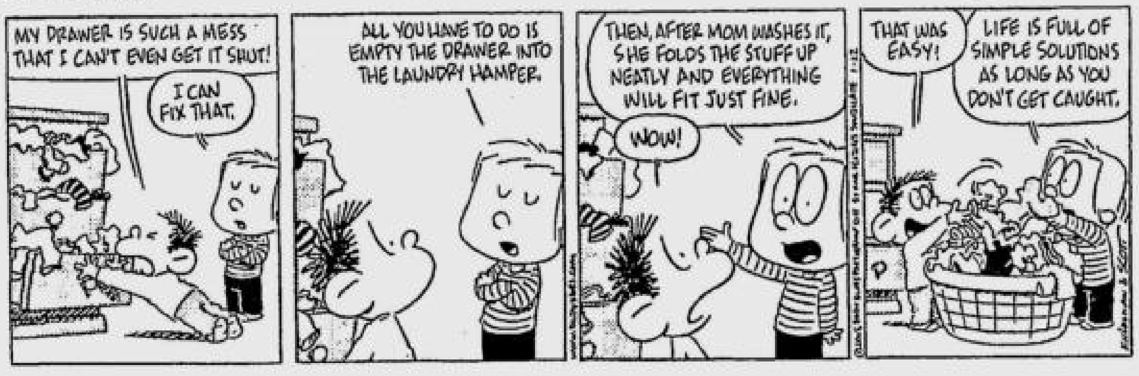
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


MALAKAS PO PALA ANG PRESSURE NG TUBIG DITO NOONG ARAW ANO PO?
NO WONDER ...
LAGI PO BA KAYONG NAGBABABAD SA SHOWER?
HINDI NAKAKA-KALBO ANG SHOWER.
NAMAMANA ITO.
HOLY SHREK!

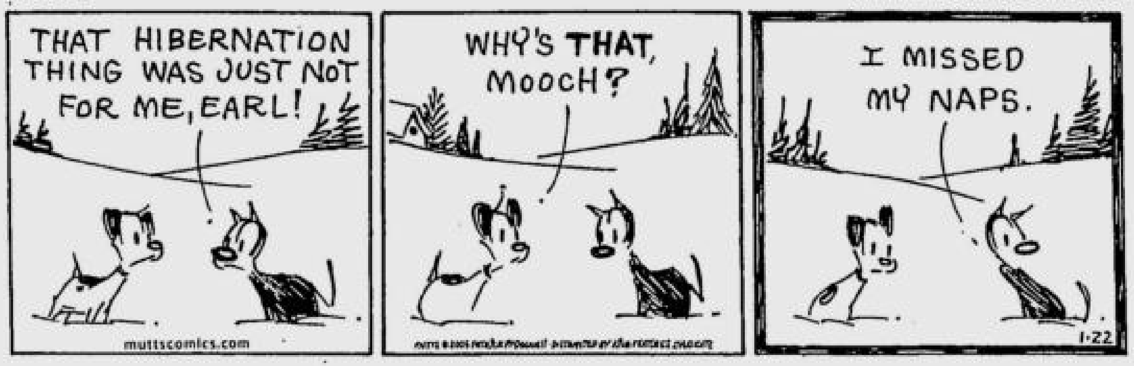
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


MY DRAWER IS SUCH A MESS THAT I CAN'T EVEN GET IT SHUT!
I CAN FIX THAT.
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS EMPTY THE DRAWER INTO THE LAUNDRY HAMPER.
THEN, AFTER MOM WASHES IT, SHE FOLDS THE STUFF UP NEATLY AND EVERYTHING WILL FIT JUST FINE.
WOW!
THAT WAS EASY!
LIFE IS FULL OF SIMPLE SOLUTIONS AS LONG AS YOU DON'T GET CAUGHT.

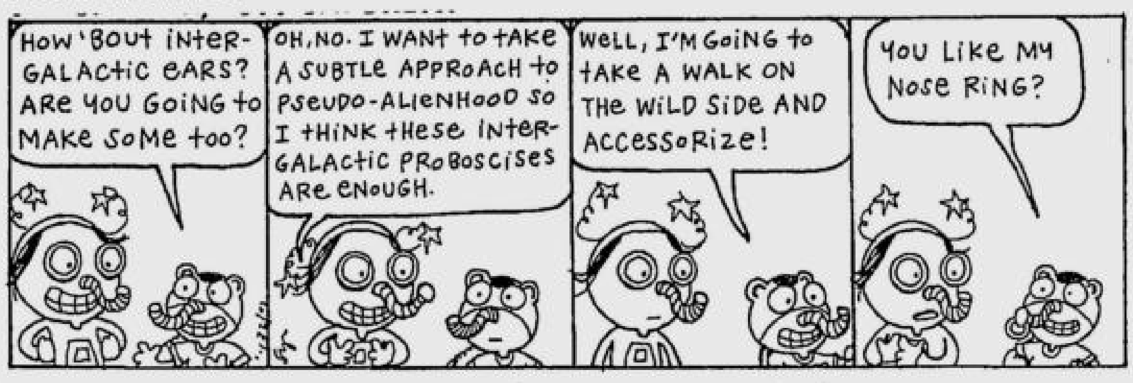
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


THAT HIBERNATION THING WAS JUST NOT FOR ME, EARL!
WHY'S THAT, MOOCH?
I MISSED MY NAPS.
muttscomics.com
1-22

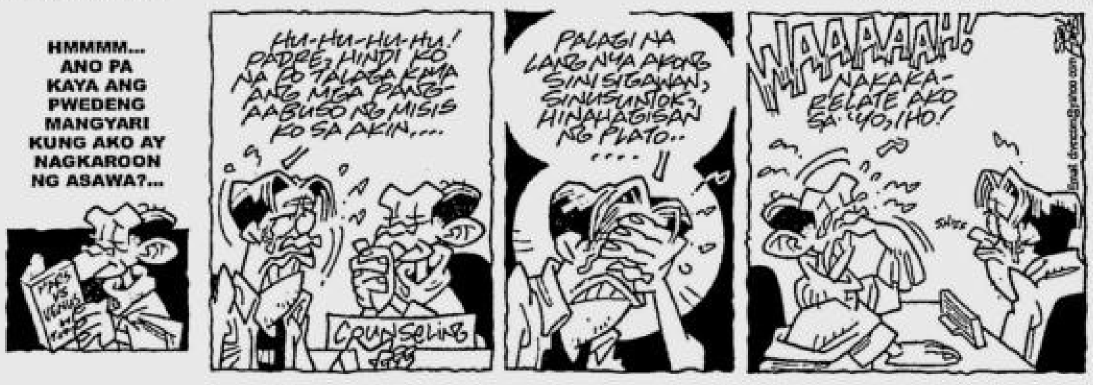
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HOW 'BOUT INTER-GALACTIC EARS? ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE SOME TOO?
OH, NO. I WANT TO TAKE A SUBTLE APPROACH TO PSEUDO-ALIENHOOD SO I THINK THESE INTER-GALACTIC PROBOSCISES ARE ENOUGH.
WELL, I'M GOING TO TAKE A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE AND ACCESSORIZE!
YOU LIKE MY NOSE RING?

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


HMMMM... ANO PA KAYA ANG PWEDENG MANGYARI KUNG AKO AY NAGKAROON NG ASAWA?...
HU-HU-HU-HU! PADRE, HINDI KO NA PO TALAGA KAYA ANG MGA PANG-AABUSO NG MISIS KO SA AKIN,...
COUNSELING
PALAGI NA LANG NYA AKONG SINISIGAWAN, SINUSUNTOK, HINAHAGISAN NG PLATO.. ....
WAAAAAH!
NAKAKA-RELATE AKO SA 'YO, IHO!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are a visionary. You know how to tell a story. Others are drawn to your energy because it's exciting and alive. Furthermore, you can arouse emotions in others and direct the efforts of people. At times, you're unusually impulsive. (To your mind, it's simply spontaneity.) The year ahead presents several major choices. Choose wisely.

Birthdate of: Olivia D'Abo, actress; Lord Byron, poet; Diane Lane, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Don't promise more than you can deliver when talking to bosses, parents or any kind of authority figure today. You might be tempted to do this!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You have big plans for travel or something connected with publishing and education, perhaps. There is always a fine line between optimism and unrealistic expectations.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Don't give away the farm today. And don't expect too much from others. An element of excess and exaggeration is in the air today. Be careful.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): In your eagerness to please a close friend or partner, you might promise the moon to someone. This is not a good idea. Think twice before you agree to anything.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is a positive, upbeat day at work. Generally speaking, it's a good day for business and commerce. However, there's a tendency to bite off more than you can chew.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is a wonderfully creative, fun-loving day! You can enjoy yourself. Make sure you make realistic promises to children. Don't disappoint the little darlings.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You have enthusiastic, expansive plans for something at home (or perhaps with a family member). This is probably a good thing. But don't begin something you can't finish.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Today, you're inclined to tell others what they want to hear. It's easy to fall into this trap. Be true to yourself; just tell it like it is.

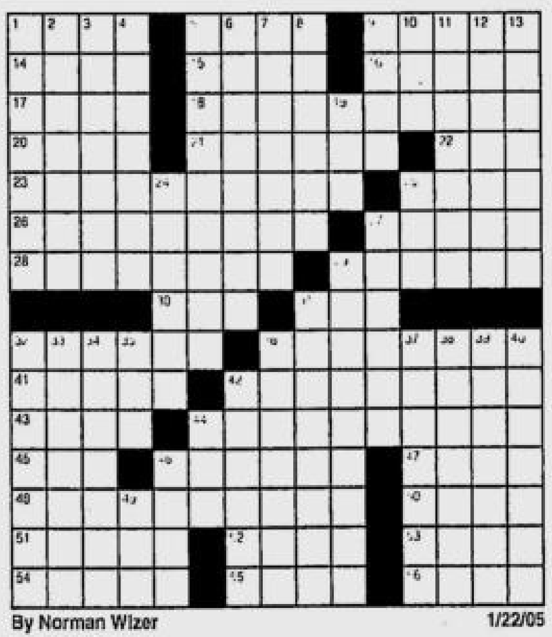
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Don't go overboard spending money today! Only spend what you have. This is definitely the day where you should not count your chickens before they hatch. (Oh, yeah.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You feel optimistic and positive about life today! You have the advantage of seeing the whole picture. It's not a great day for detail work, but it's good for big, broad strokes.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): If you're planning something today, it's easy to overlook details. In all your business transactions or dealings with the government, be careful that you have your facts straight.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You easily encourage others to endorse your ideas today. People will follow you anywhere right now. Your upbeat enthusiasm is infectious. (This is a good thing.)

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Norman Wizer
Malvern, PA

1/22/05

ACROSS
1 Hebrew lyre
5 Word after chain or junk
9 Lanchester and Schiaparelli
14 Moses' mount
15 Forearm bone
16 I dunno
17 New Mexico art colony
18 TV classic (with "The")
20 Nastase of the nets
21 Gulps of liquor
22 "Le coq __," Rimsky-Korsakoff opera
23 Old-fashioned bedroom conveniences
25 Delicate
26 Opposites
27 St. __ Cardinals
28 Answers back
29 Destinies
30 Oolong or darjeeling
31 Open an auction
32 Reconnoiters
36 Liquidates
41 Ahead of time
42 Thousands of years
43 Lyra star
44 Effervescent beverages
45 NASA's ISS partner
46 During flight
47 It is French?
48 Barfly's bar bill
50 Winslet of "Titanic"
51 Disney mermaid
52 Coastal eagle
53 Le Gallienne and Gabor
54 Pulled strings?
55 Manuscript enc.
56 Breather

DOWN
1 Dovish
2 Water passage
3 Orchestra members
4 Fruit of a fragrant flower
5 Dark gray sedimentary rocks
6 "The Four Seasons" star
7 Utters monotonously
8 Scottish landowners
9 Early birds?
10 Captain's journal
11 Concert site
12 Fertilizer ingredient
13 Sibyl
19 PMs
24 Uneven
25 In honor of
27 Soup-kitchen worker
29 Dangerous stinger
31 Ghent people
32 A few
33 Pause in conversation
34 Naturally grown
35 End of a spat?
36 "Love and Marriage" singer
37 Between-meals nosher
38 Absent with permission
39 Holidays in Honduras
40 Most swift
42 Gnatlike flies
44 Card game
46 Temperate
49 Banns word

Friday's Puzzle Solved

P	A	R	A	■	T	O	D	D	■	F	A	U	L	T
O	M	A	R	■	O	G	R	E	■	I	M	P	E	I
L	A	I	R	■	S	L	A	B	■	N	I	T	E	R
I	N	T	O	T	H	E	W	I	N	D	■	O	R	E
S	A	T	Y	R	■	■	S	T	A	S	I	S	■	■
■	■	■	O	U	T	P	O	S	T	■	S	N	A	G
A	G	O	■	S	H	I	N	■	■	E	L	U	D	E
T	I	N	Y	T	O	T	■	H	A	V	E	F	U	N
A	N	T	E	S	■	■	M	A	C	E	■	F	E	E
D	A	H	L	■	L	O	I	T	E	R	S	■	■	■
■	■	E	L	V	I	R	A	■	■	S	A	G	E	T
N	E	B	■	O	U	T	O	F	B	O	U	N	D	S
E	L	E	N	I	■	E	W	E	R	■	C	O	D	A
I	S	A	A	C	■	G	E	N	A	■	E	M	I	R
L	E	T	B	E	■	A	D	D	S	■	S	E	E	S

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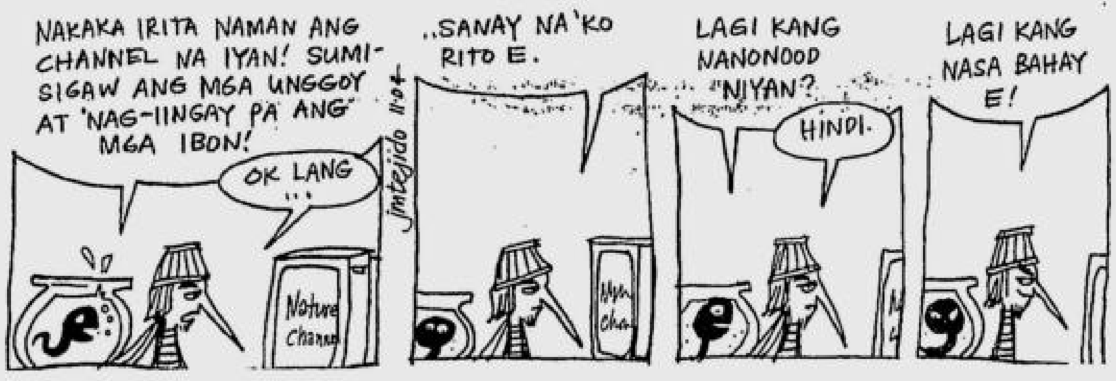
1/22/05

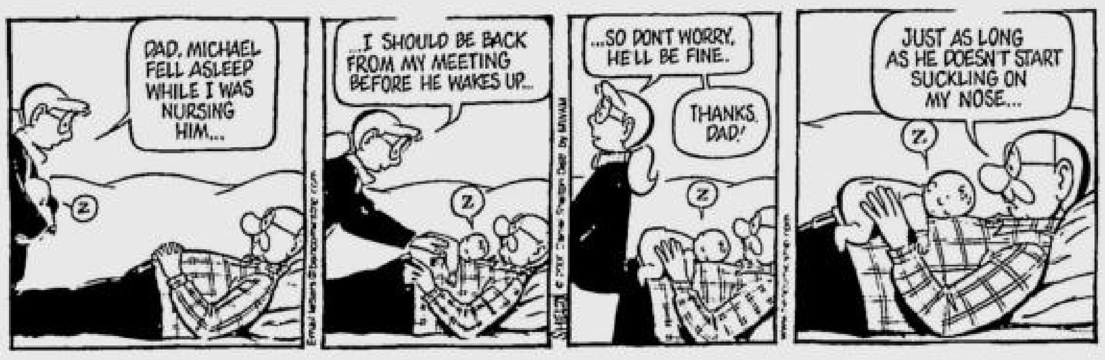
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NAKAKA IRITA NAMAN ANG CHANNEL NA IYAN! SUMI-SIGAW ANG MGA UNGGOY AT 'NAG-IINGAY PA ANG MGA IBON!
OK LANG ...
Nature Chann
..SANAY NA'KO RITO E.
LAGI KANG NANONOOD "NIYAN?
HINDI.
LAGI KANG NASA BAHAY E!

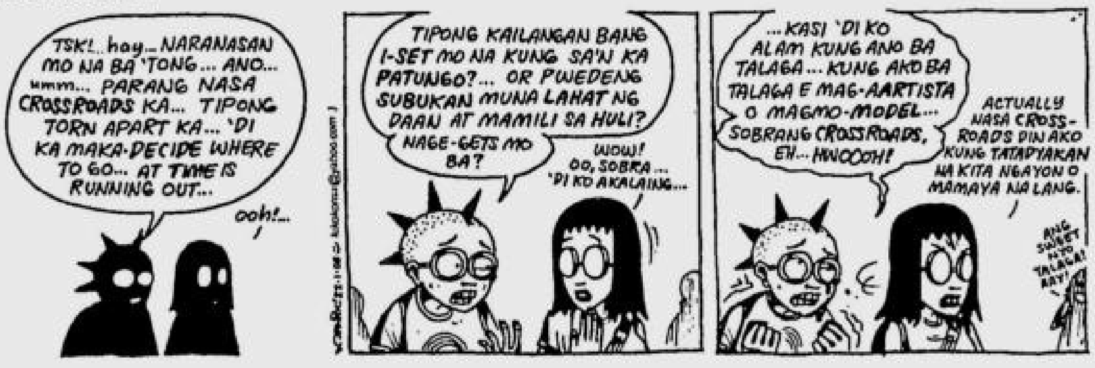
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


DAD, MICHAEL FELL ASLEEP WHILE I WAS NURSING HIM...
...I SHOULD BE BACK FROM MY MEETING BEFORE HE WAKES UP...
...SO DON'T WORRY, HE'LL BE FINE.
THANKS, DAD!
JUST AS LONG AS HE DOESN'T START SUCKLING ON MY NOSE...

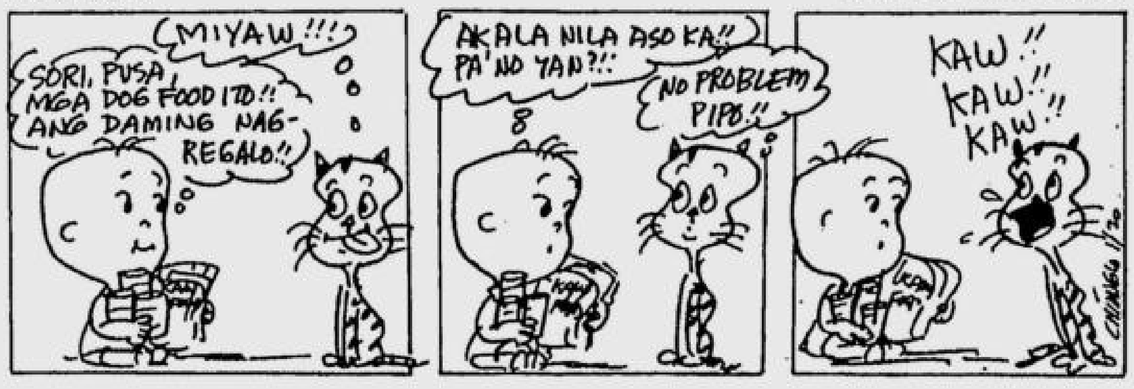
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


TSK!..hay... NARANASAN MO NA BA 'TONG... ANO... umm... PARANG NASA CROSSROADS KA... TIPONG TORN APART KA... 'DI KA MAKA-DECIDE WHERE TO GO... AT TIME IS RUNNING OUT...
ooh!...
TIPONG KAILANGAN BANG I-SET MO NA KUNG SA'N KA PATUNGO?... OR PWEDENG SUBUKAN MUNA LAHAT NG DAAN AT MAMILI SA HULI? NAGE-GETS MO BA?
WOW! OO, SOBRA... 'DI KO AKALAING...
...KASI 'DI KO ALAM KUNG ANO BA TALAGA... KUNG AKO BA TALAGA E MAG-AARTISTA O MAGMO-MODEL... SOBRANG CROSSROADS, EH... HNOOOH!
ACTUALLY NASA CROSS-ROADS DIN AKO KUNG TATAPYAKAN NA KITA NGAYON O MAMAYA NA LANG.
ANG SWEET NITO TALAGA! ARY!

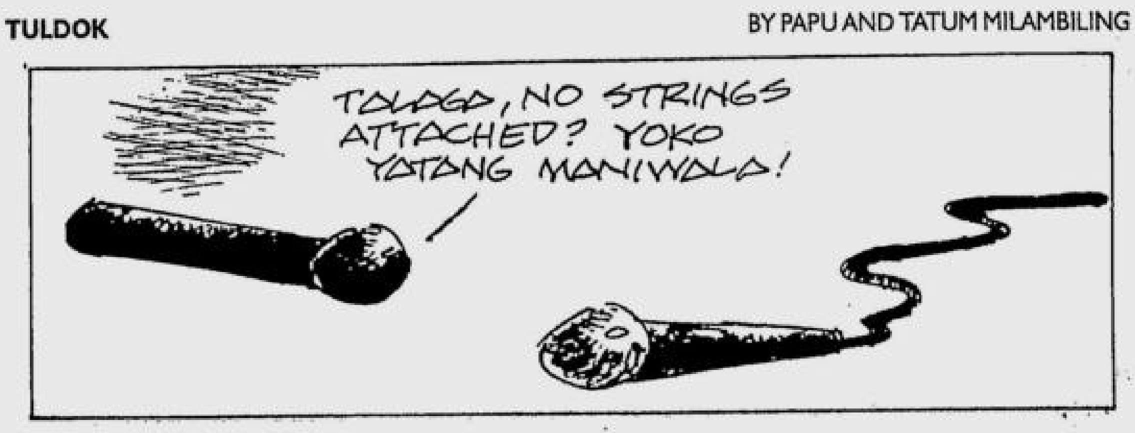
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MIYAW!!!
SORI, PUSA, MGA DOG FOOD ITO!! ANG DAMING NAG-REGALO!!
AKALA NILA ASO KA!! PA'NO YAN?!!
NO PROBLEM PIPO!!
KAW!! KAW!! KAW!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


TALAGA, NO STRINGS ATTACHED? YOKO YATANG MANIWALA!

The 'Me Years'

From page F1

Brief existential trauma

As a like-minded member of this twentysomething fellowship, I totally understand Prince Harry, though I do so with an uncomfortable smile. At 20, my sense of impunity, too, was unrivaled, even if I wasn't exactly aware of the word's Webster definition. (In true "E! True Hollywood Story" fashion, I once apparently went berserk during lunchtime in school and started kicking a Trekkie, whom my friends stuffed inside a box. Very "A Separate Peace." Oops, I was 12 when that happened. Twenty was an alcoholic blur.)

This is not to say that I am completely responsible now that I'm a bit north of 21, because I'd like to think I still keep the idea of youthful abandon alive and kicking. The only difference, I guess, is that my 20s have become a little more gentrified. (In fact, it's currently like a Wes Anderson film.)

In a world of spiraling choice—when picking the ring tone on your cell phone can become a brief existential trauma—finding out what you want on a wider scale appears to be getting tougher and tougher. But by learning to overcome day-to-day obstacles with the unfashionable virtues of patience and tolerance and factoring in a sense of yin-yang balance to an otherwise breakneck existence, we twentysomethings can still live in the moment without bouncing off the walls like hamsters on cocaine. Or not.

If you're in your 20s, single with no kids, and feel strangely invincible, welcome to the best years of your life!

RUN, LOLO, RUN! Travel now while you still can. Don't wait till you're 50.

The 'Me Years' checklist

In college, at work or in general, here are twenty (dubious) nuggets of wisdom from one me-obsessed twentysomething to another:

1. Don't make your resolutions boring. Or do, then don't follow them.

2. Don't have a birthday party. Have 15 birthday parties. Everyone's nicer to you on your birthday. If you can stretch that to half a month, then that's half a month's worth of nicer people. Think about it.

3. Make peace with how you look, but never stop working on it. Keep evolving. If you look the same now as you did in, say, 1999, then it can only be one of two things. You haven't changed because a) you've always looked older than you really are or b) you've had some work done.

4. Travel, travel, travel. Pause. Repeat. Now's the time to see the world. You can't run with the bulls in Pamplona when you're 50. I mean, you can, but you won't be able to outrun them then. Ouch.

5. Don't get married unless you really, really have to. Nothing provokes a random killing spree more than a roomful of once-cool friends who now only talk about their spouses and/or babies. Barf!

6. Play with your body. Again, Hedi Slimane advises, "Thin is better with clothes. Big, in terms of shape, is better without clothes. It is a matter of choice and taste." Amen.

IT'S THE BANGS. If 26-year-old Ben McKenzie can play 16-year-old Ryan Atwood on "The O.C.," anything is possible

7. Grow some bangs. Never expose your forehead. Forehead equals wisdom. Wisdom equals boring. Boring equals death.

8. If those O.C. kids can do it, so can you. Look, 26-year-old Ben McKenzie plays 16 on prime time television. Surely anything is possible.

9. Never finish more than 40 percent of your daily to-do list. If you did, what would you do tomorrow?

10. Look busy. It's less stressful than actually being busy. I do this by following what I learned in the Ron Livingston movie "Office Space": If you're in the workplace, keep on opening and closing desk drawers, straightening up piles of paper, or pretending to be on the phone. The constant movement will make it seem that you're full of activity when you're really not. Genius.

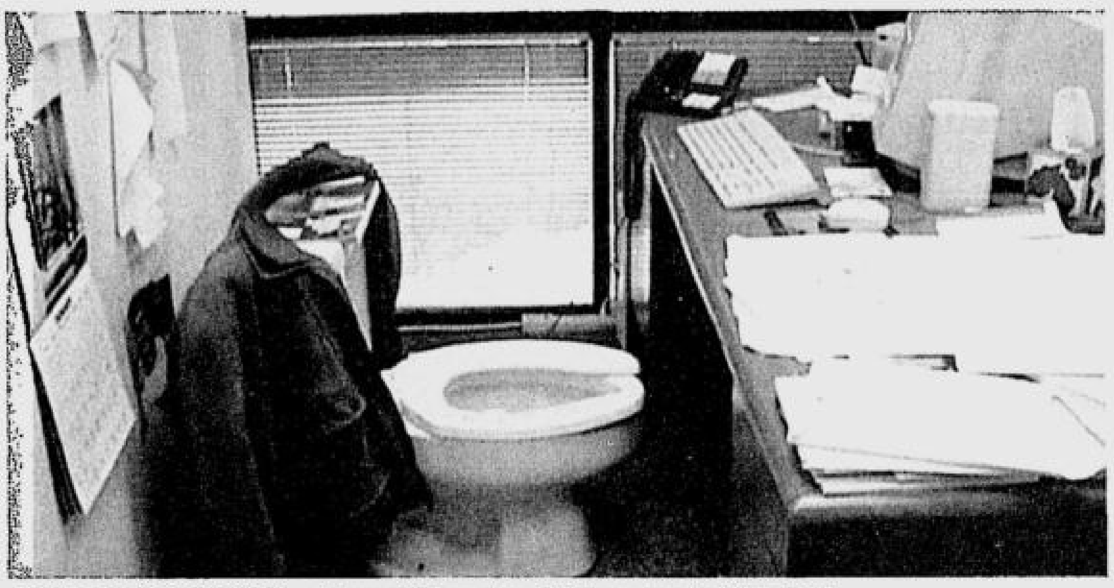
11. Forget about those permanent records. They're nonexistent, just like Kris Aquino's talent. They told you to behave in high school, but you set the cafeteria on fire. Where's that red mark now, HUH? So there.

12. Improve your mind by meditating. Afterwards, reach for the porn. Your newfound Zen will make the smut even more lucid. The porn, meanwhile, will keep you from becoming too hoity-toity. A win-win situation.

13. Schedule your day, but make sure to pencil in a few naps. Ready, set... *relax*.

14. Mix drinks. Don't be afraid of a hangover. Your body can still handle it.

15. Recycle business cards of boring people. At cocktail parties, you're likely to clink drinks with these mind-numbing types who think you'd be really fascinated with their inane anecdotes. Resist all urges to flush their business cards down the toilet. Instead, pass them off as your own. Pretend to be these people and formulate stories to make their lives more electrifying than they really are. "Yes, my name is (insert name here)... Ah, but see, that was before I was under house arrest... No, I USED to be a necrophilic hermaphrodite..." Something like that.



OFFICE SPACE CADET. Look busy. It's less stressful than actually being busy

16. Always look puzzled when you want to be left alone. People don't want to bug you when you look deep in thought. The key to this is a little method acting. To look baffled, just ask yourself the following question: "What did I have for dinner last night?" Got it? Now hold as needed.

17. Seize the day, but start after lunch. While it's true that the early bird gets the worm, it's also worth mentioning that eager beavers are always the ones who die first. For proof, see Wes Craven's "Scream" trilogy.

18. Have your photo taken every year by a professional. When a pro is unavailable and/or beyond your budget, you can still achieve the high fashion vibe by looking pensive in your photos. See #16 for instructions.

19. Do whatever the hell you want. Being self-centered may make you fail, but the real world can be conquered with that one simple word: confidence. If you believe in yourself—and your ability to use your talents to succeed—sooner or later, you will. And the world will reward your confidence. Happy day.

20. Just don't dress like a Nazi. 'Nuff said.

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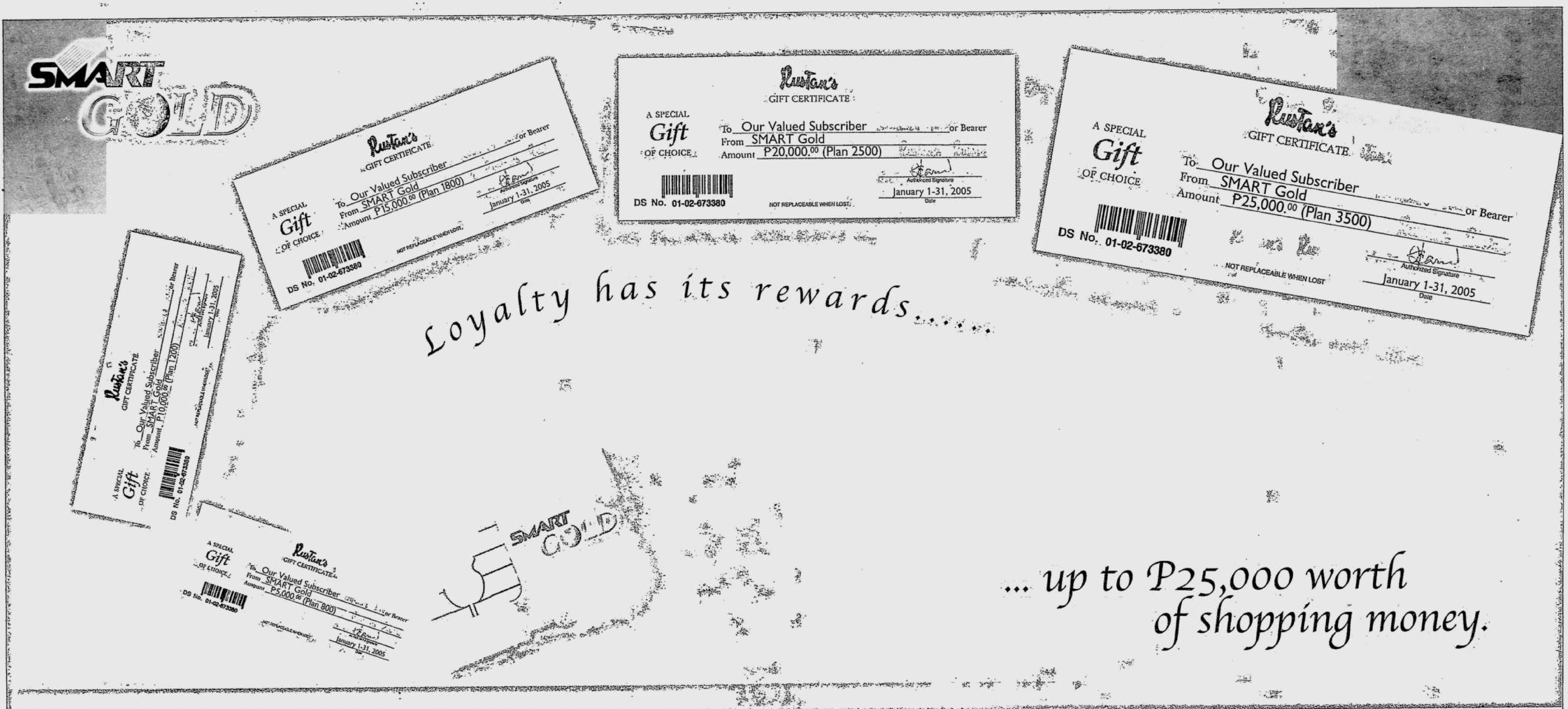
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